

Global Alliance of Community Forestry (GACF)

Enhancing Locally Controlled Forestry

Voice of Community Forestry Media Program

Brief Reporting 2010 (Draft)

Background

Global Alliance of Community Forestry (GACF) is a global umbrella network of federation, association and networks of community forestry across the world. The GACF was established in 2004 with the objective of sustainable forest management with secure tenure and access right to forestry, strengthening the networks and federations of community forestry globally to bring the community voices to the policy at the different level, and sharing experience among the networks and federation of community forestry.

Family forest owners, communities and indigenous people manage locally about 25 per cent of the World's forest, providing a broad range of economic, environmental, social, cultural and spiritual benefits. Most of their forest holdings are small.

IIED has taken the initiative to support communication activities advancing locally controlled forestry and their objectives to ensure sustainable forest management. The Forest Dialogue has facilitated dialogues around the challenge of investing in locally controlled forestry. During the dialogues in 2009 and 2010 one of the outputs was the identification of common interests between community forestry, family forestry and tribal and indigenous peoples. The collaboration between these three Alliances resulted in the network organisation called The Three Rights Holders Group, G3.

The partners in The Three Rights Holders Group are The Global Alliance of Community Forestry, GACF, The International Alliance of Tribal and Indigenous Peoples of the Tropical Forest, IAITPTF, and The International Family Forestry Alliance, IFFA. During meetings between the Alliances and with representatives from the IIED plans and budgets for further development of locally controlled forestry was outlined. This brief reporting on voice of community forestry media programme ran by GACF under the communication budget funding supported by IIED. GACF has done the communication project with cooperation of Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal (FECOFUN) and other partner organization and community forestry users groups. Voice of Community forestry programme has broadcasted by Community Radio Prakriti FM 93.4 MHz and Nepal Television broadcasted the television programme. Radio and television program are produced in the success of community forest. These are some success stories that are broadcasted, which are translated in English. This programme supported to the local community forestry users groups to bring their stories and issues to wider stakeholders.

1. Bhawanipur Community Forest Users Group, Sunsari Empowerment and Income generation

Conservation of bio-diversity is basis for sustainable development while forest is considered major source of bio-diversity. There is close relationship between human being and forest for centuries. The relation comes closer as fate of human depends on it including simple needs from fuel to livelihood. The importance of forest is higher in developing countries like Nepalese as around over two-third population of country depends on forest and majority of people, who are under poverty below line are fully depending on farming. Given the context, the concept of community forest program was introduced in Nepal for sustainable management, promotion and utilization of forest in Nepal. Nepal's community forest has brought significant change in terms of creating awareness, empowerment and employment of local people except conservation and management of forest at the local level. Here is a notable success story of community forest from Sunsari district, southern part of the country.

In 2055 BS, locals formed Bhawanipur Community Forest User's Group (CFUG) for managing the local forest in their own way. This forest was handed over to local community sooner they formed users' group. There by, its overall management and protection is under their supervision. The consumers have intensified plantation and protection of forest simultaneously. Over 65 hectares of open land is planted. Moreover, this community forest has become a reliable source of income generation for marginalized and backward consumers. Locals say they have been earning Rs. 70 lakh annually.

"Two years ago, we planted asparagus named American Jerseyking from which we earned over Rs. 72 lakh last year alone. The community forest has also become a source of employment to locals." Jagannath Chaulagain, Chairperson Bhawanipur Community Forest Users' Group, Sunsari said.

The CFUG has created job opportunities for marginalized group, dalit, women and indigenous nationalities and other poor people. The community forest has inspired locals to participate in plantation, protection and scientific management of the forest in their own way.

"We planted various species of trees including herbs related plants like asparagus as compared to neighboring community forests. This community forest has envisioned in developing this area as tourist spot. To that effect small ponds and lakes surrounding forest are repaired and cleaned up," says Durga Prasad Poudel, Vice-Chairperson Bhawanipur Community Forest, Sunsari.

Rubber plantation is yet another important task done in this community forest. Locals have started to plant rubber with the target of covering total of 7 hectares by the next year. "We have started to plant rubber tree after concluding that importance of rubber plantation is better from view point of income generation and sustainable management of forest. Mere traditional tree cannot maintain greenery and provide sustainability of forest sector. Hope we will be success to

plan to convert over 7 hectares of open land by the next year," says Prem Gurung, former Chairperson of Bhawanipur Community Forest User's Group, Sunsari.

Community forest has empowered backward community offering various job opportunities. It has also supported locals in installing bio-gas, constructing local infrastructure and managing forest in a scientific way.

Here is success story from the same district. Locals formed Langhali Community Forest Users' Group decide to handover forest to locally formed users' group. After the government handed over it to community for sustainable management greenery seems returned here and job opportunities are created locally.

"Community forest users were trained to make briquette. Now, each community forest consumers earn Rs. 6,000 monthly despite their regular household management," says Gopal Shreshta, environment Coordinator, Langhali Community Forest Users' Group. This community forest users group has launched various pro-consumer programs in association with various organizations working in the field of forest conservation. Locals have prioritized to construct garden for developing this areas as tourism spot.

"We discuss over managing forest in a sustainable way. To that effect we have tried to construct beautiful garden inside this community forest," says Bijaya Kala Rai, Joint-secretary of Langhali Community Forest User's Group. The community forest has also created lots of job opportunities mobilizing local resources in its own hand.

2. Dahijhoda Community

Forest Conservation and Poverty Reduction goes together

Recently published ADB report has stated that over 50 per cent out of total Nepali population is under poverty below line. It is very essential to mobilize local resource for poverty reduction. In this regard, Nepal's community forest, which has been paying special contribution for poverty reduction might be better weapon to combat against poverty. Here is an evidence to prove such statement. It is about Dahijhoda Community Forest situated in Jhapa district. Established in 2052 this community forest was handed over to community forest and covers total area of 1164 hectares. Over 8 thousands locals are benefited directly or indirectly.

"We have decided to allocate 25 per cent budget of total income for marginalized community,

poor, dalit women. We have been depositing that amount to locally formed Hariyali Saving Cooperatives. They can use it in their own when they face trouble," says Amar Katawal, Chairperson of Dahijhoda Community Forest User's Group.

From the very beginning of its formation this community forest has been trying its best to spend the allocated budget in infrastructure and income generation sector. "This community forest is working hard to uplift the lifestyle of backward and marginalized community. Our activities are focused on expanding electricity facility, upgrading road, health, education and drinking water facilities in a better way." adds Khagendra Subba, Secretary Dahijhoda Community Forest Users' Group "We want to continue such social welfare scheme in the days ahead."

This community forest is operating operated Hariyali Saving and Credit Cooperative. Rs. 1 million is collected till the date. The Cooperatives provides to desired loan to consumers for goat keeping, pig keeping and so other way of income generation.

"A total of 564 people from the most marginalized community received loan from us under various category. We can provide only Rs. 5 thousand to each family duet to financial crunch. Most consumers invested loan for sugarcane farming, goat, livestock, poultry, pig keeping and commercial purpose" TilRupa Khanal, Chairperson Hariyali Saving and Cooperative says. Women are empowered in coordination between the women saving and credit cooperative and community forest. "First of all 25 per cent of total forest income is collected in their name. The same amount is mobilized to women as per the recommendation from community forest. So, there is inter-relation between the women group and community forest," says Hariyali saving and Credit Cooperative Secretary Pramila Budhathoki.

In this way, community forest is playing its role in poverty reduction. Skill development trainings, infrastructure development like road, bridge, operation of local school, bio-gas, livestock keeping, briquette production and commercial farming are name of few activities carried out on behalf of community forest users group. Such activities have contributed to protect forest and reduce poverty simultaneously.

3. Jamunbari Community Forestry Users Group Jhapa Tourist Darling

Forest is not only source of livelihood but also a way of income generation. Many people are benefited from mutual relation with the forest. The provision of ILO 169, which ensures local's rights on natural resources, has made the local people more responsible on it. This visual is from Jamubari community forest of Jhapa district. This community forest was handed over to

community in 2052 BS. A total of 3986 people are benefited from it. From the very beginning of its handover to local people the consumers were united for its better development. Consequently, now it has been changed into tourism spot while past greenery is achieved after planting bamboo and rubber trees.

"This community forest is also known as Jamunkhadi Eco Tourism and Wetland spot. We concentrated on finding possible ways how this can be helpful for maintain sustainable forest management and income generation simultaneously. Consequently, we have planted rubber, bamboo tree, which is providing both job opportunities to consumers. The rubber farming has provided for five consumers. We earn Rs. 2 thousands daily. We have planted bamboo tree on 5 hectors of forest land. We are hopeful that it will be also fruitful for us in terms of getting income. Moreover, we have been trying to develop this area as Eco-tourism spot by protecting wetlands." Parshu Ram Giri, Chairperson Jamunkhadi Community Forest User's Group says. This area is declared Jamunkhadi Eco-tourism and Wetland Spot in 2065 BS in an effort to make it unique rather than other community forest. Despite lack of proper publicity around 10 thousand domestic and foreign tourists visit this spot daily while 10 hundred thousand tourists reached here last year.

"We worked hardly for three years to develop this area as tourist spot. Now, the locals from neighboring districts like Ilam, Morang and neighboring country Darjeeling arrive here. "The flow of tourist reaches 10 thousands daily mainly during October, November, December, January, February and March. However, the number goes down during off-season. According to my personal experience over 10 hundred thousand tourists visited this sport last year alone." says Giri.

The community forest users have also started protecting endangered wildlife. As of now, different 12 endangered spices are preserved here in a safe manner. This move has also helped to attract tourists. Tourists enjoy here observing greenery, endangered wildlife and boating experience at once. Local's such attempts has not only attracted tourists but also generated income sources for poor people. Primarily locals want to conserve forest. "Earlier to this, this area was known as shelter of poorest of the poor. After incoming better they had started to buy land on their own. The community forest has offered job for 24 consumers." he says. This community forest aims to support Nepal Tourism Year-2011, national tourism program, in a grand manner inviting more tourists adopting any means. "We are working honestly for making government's program a success. It is an example to learn on how community forest is contributing to invite more tourists in the community forest. We have planned to construct children parks and conduct horse riding by next year." says Giri.

It has been proved that locally formed community forest can also contribute in national level program. The government, Nepal tourism Board, concerned agencies and other stakeholders must pay their attention in line to support such noble initiatives taken by locals.

4. Thoplebiran Community Forest Users Group Jhapa

Way of empowering women

Locals were formally authorized to protect Thoplebiran community forest on their own hand in 2053 BS. This community forest which is situated in ward no. four, five and six of Mechinagar municipality covers total of 174.5 hectares of forest land. A total of 426 households are directly benefited from it. From the very beginning of its formation this community forest is concentrating on its attention for empowering marginalized, poor and backward community. The social program includes financial support to poor and scholarship programs for their school going children.

"From the very beginning of establishment this community forest has been playing its leading role for enhancing community forest program in the district. The school going children of backward people are awarded with scholarship scheme. Some of them are running at 11th grade. Similarly, skill development program and women empowerment programs are operating for other consumers. A total of 48 hectares forest land is planted, in which 6000 bamboo trees are planted. This community forest is noted as one of the best community forest in terms of conservation," says Indra Pathak, Chairperson Thoplebiran Community Forest User's Group. Women empowerment is another important achievement gained among locals. Thoplebiran Women Group was formed in 2059 BS and various activities are in operation for empowerment of women. They collect fund and mobilize it among the marginalized women. Currently, over Rs. 1 million of amount is deposited at their own bank. The collected amount is mobilized among the consumers taking very lower interest.

"We have formed a women development group named Thoplebiran Women Development Group in 2059 BS. Initially we collected Rs 25 from each household monthly and its total deposit has reached to Rs 1 million now," Januka Oli, secretary Thopleban Community Forest, Jhapa said. The community forest has focused its activities in agricultural sector as well. Different 10 agricultural based organizations are formed. Goat exchange and farming training are operating at the local. "The major achievement gained through women group program is their own empowerment. Those women who used to hide their own identity ahead of new commoners can speak about them in free and frank way. Those formed organizations are registered at district agriculture office. Recently, we concluded IPM and mushroom farming training for them. They have been demanding to manage bee keeping training now" says Oli.

The community forest has been adopting inclusive nature in use of forest products. Such tendencies are practiced even in organizational formation and collective activities as well. "The indigenous nationalities dalits and women are participated in working committee propositionally. The existing 17-member working committee includes nine women. It is divided into five regions where women participate is highly prioritized. We have 29 forest patrolling team. Regional teams are also formed comprising women participation," says Pathak.

The community forest manages construction materials for the construction of house and scholarship program for their children. So, there is no limit of joy among the consumers. "In the past, we were poorest of the poor. The group assisted us and we also worked hard. Consequently, we are got our own shelter. We hope our community forest will go ahead in this way. Government must introduce skill oriented program for poor people like us," a local says. What did you get from community forest in constructing this house? "We should not speak lie. They offered us job and we earned money," says a local. You had no house in the past? "Yes, we were homeless before this", a women consumer. Did they offer this opportunity directly? "I had applied an application and later they provided me Rs 10 thousands," said a consumer.

Such examples are few among others. There are hundreds of success stories set in the community on behalf of community forest. Nepal's community forest, which is considered one of the best participatory development models, has paid its special contribution in poverty reduction, consumer's rights natural resources and development activities.

5 Bansbari Community Forestry Users Group Jhapa **Development Model**

Consumers of locally formed community forest are actively involved in conserving and protecting the forest at local level. The screening visual is an example of locally managed community forest. This is Basbari community forest of Jhapa districts. It covers the forest land of three separate wards—ward no. 7, 8, 9—of Dhajjan Village Development Committee (VDC). In 2053 BS the government handed over this forest to local consumers in a bid to preserve it in their own way. It's total forest area is 147.25 hectares, where 367 households of local consumers are directly benefited from it. The consumers are actively engaged in various social activities including poverty reduction, infrastructure development and women empowerment apart from their prime objective of forest management.

"Initially, this community forest identified 67 landless households. Now, they have been receiving house, bed and other basic needs freely under our 10-year programme. Moreover, public land is fixed for their en mess settlement. Rs 10,0000 is deposited to locally formed

saving groups annually with view to mobilize it to have not for their livelihood. A separate Poverty Reduction Fund is established to minimize its risk," Gopal Bahadur Panta, Chairperson of Bansbari Community Forest Users' Group says. This community forest mobilizes its resources in the field of community rights and social welfare. Distribution of solar energy, development of picnic spot and availability of electricity facilities are its major objectives. Taking the benefit from its resource alternative energy is managed to its consumers. 10 bio-gase plants are installed annually. The forest income is used to pay salary of school teachers. "The construction of Nagadhunga Bridge is completed. Rs 1 million is allocated for installing solar power aiming to control loss of wildlife like elephant and others. A dam is constructed in Dhakrekola. We want to use this dam as boating and enchanting picnic spot," adds Panta.

The community forest had constructed housing for landless people. It is great relief for them. "The same Bansbari community forest constructed my house. It's really genuine for landless local like me," says Mani Kisan, a consumer. "Yes, Bansbari community forest constructed my home. Before this, I used to take shelter in a temporarily constructed hut," says Kapu Kisan, another consumer.

Two years ago, Bansbari community forest planted bamboo tree on five hectares of bare land and now they are growing up. This indicates that community forest might bag good income from it. "We have estimated to earn around Rs 1.5 million even when half of its production is taken out," Laxmi Prasad Prasain, Secretary Bansbari Community Forest Users' Group says. Bansbari community forest is willing to share its knowledge on bamboo farming. "It grows up better in shady places and remains for centuries once it is planted. If other needs suggestions including provide seeds and plants Bansbari community forest is ready to support them at any time," adds Prasain. As community forest reaches to height in terms of popularity various social welfare and development activities are done at community level. The local schools are operated in their own. The social activities like empowerment, agriculture and poverty reduction program are continued. In terms of social activities the efforts of Bansbari community forest is really memorable.

5. Prajapti Community Forestry Users Group, Jhapa **Donor of Marginalized People**

Once Surunga village of Jhapa was merely a bare hill but the same place is changed into an enchanting forest in the recent days. It is an evidence to know on how community managed forest is developing in a successful manner. Prajapti community forest was formed in 2052 BS and local initiated its entire management in their own way. Local civil society members have played their leading role in returning greenery. Initially, locals worked hard to launch awareness campaign on community forest adopting various means. After awareness creating awareness campaign different social and development activities are operating at local level.

"With the establishment of this community forest it has taken various important steps in preserving forest. First of all, we started Adult Literacy Program. Thereby, child development campaign was launched in the community. This community forest established Pashupati Primary School where now primary level educating is continued. The community forest is responsible for managing both teachers' salary and administration expenditure," says Durga Prasad Niraula, Chairperson Prajapati Community Forest user's Group. A large number of consumers are involved in preserving this community. Almost all forest income is invested as per their own interest. Such efforts largely support marginalized community. The community forest has constructed houses for marginalized community, while is great achievement for those have not people. In response, they support community forest program with full respect. "We had organized different program to categorize financial status of consumers. After diving them into four—elite, medium, poor and poorest of poor --, we decided to support poorest of poor with high priority. The community forest provide financial loan for their livelihood and constructed houses for shelter. As of now, we constructed 12 houses, (7 completed constructed and 7 partially supported)," adds Niraula.

Community forest has installed bio-gas plants at local level. Bio-gas installation program has avoided past sorrows and life style is completely changed.

"Forest constructed my house," says a consumer.

"Earlier, we used to take shelter under hut. Water used to ooze during rainy season. Community forest loved us and constructed this home," says another local.

"Community forest granted Rs 2 thousands for installing bio-gas. It's quite fast, safe and good for cooking," says another community forest consumer.

"My son and daughter have no time to collect woods from jungle. They uses bio-gas for cooking. It's good," says another local. On the one hand community forest has supported to preserve forest and on the other hand it has empowered local increasing their income generation. To make it more practical locals has formed cooperative on their own way.

"We operated cooperative with the view that more people can be connected up immediately and future plan will be success collectively. Those women who used to hesitate even to introduce with others are named as cooperative members," says Pramila Dagi, local forest activist. Nepal's community forest is accepted as one of the most successful participatory program in South Asia. It has contributed lots in terms of environmental protection and social and financial uplift of local community. Despite all serious questions are raised frequently regarding it rights and working criteria, which is a matter of anxiety to dedicated forest activist and consumers. Thus, it would be better if the government corrects such malpractices on time.

6. COMMUNITY FOREST A SUCCESS STORY

The history of community forest is not so long in Nepalese context but its' achievement gained within short timeframe is really historic one. Thousands of community forest users group formed across the country, are actively involved in the field of forest conservation uniting under Federation of Community Forest User's Nepal (FECOFUN), umbrella organization of community forest activist. FECOFUN's nationwide network is extended up to grass root level of 75 districts. Around 10 million forest users organized under 15,000 community forest users' groups are united in forest conservation movement.

Community forest covers around 21 percent of total forest land in Nepal. Consumers preserves, manages and use community forest in their own way. FECOFUN is paying its crucial contributing in formulating forestry guidelines and community rights. The community forest movement adopts democratic and inclusiveness nature as its core value. This is the real cause behind the success of community forest. Hence, its reputation is spreading all over world. "I have an experience of worked in different organizations but my personal experience is that this community forest program is the best model of inclusiveness. Whether you talk about gender, ethnicity, disable or geography here is quite harmony of inclusiveness. This theory does not apply only in Federation but also in locally formed user group as well," says FECOFUN central working committee Sonam Chhiring Lama.

Women empowerment and poverty reduction program are in the operation. Community forest program is supporting backward, marginalized and poor people by grants or loan for housing, livestock keeping and farming schemes. Bio-gas plant and alternative energy is managed for consumers. FECOFUN has been operating various supporting program for marginalized community either mobilizing its resource or joining hands with international donor community. Such program are proved milestone in uplifting the life style of marginalized community and promotion of forest sector.

"It's only a matter of Terai even in our Magdi district women are empowered due to community forestry program. A total of 10 users' groups are formed under the leadership of women. Magdi FECOFUN has reaches to remote part of district with social welfare program including renewal energy, women empowerment program among others," Pashupati Shahi, FECOFUN Central Working Committee says.

Women are closely attached with the forest than others. That's why their involvement is visually

seen in preserving forest. Those same women once were limited to household activities are now seems standing in the fore front of movement with noble cause of preserving forest. They have been demanding 50 per cent of share within the FECOFUN. "It's obvious. Women are mostly engaged in forest conservation. Women spent their entire life in forest whether in sorrow or joy. That's why we have been demanding equal representation within the organization. FECOFUN has also implemented its constitutional provision in terms of ensuring 50 percent women from central to local level," FECOFUN Central Working Committee member says Manju Malasi. "In the changed context, we all women are empowered. FECOFUN's mandatory decision to participate 50 per cent women is implementing at the local level. We want to convey our message for all rural women to stand up for grabbing own rights and opportunities," says FECOFUN Central Working Committee member Ratna Ghimire.

The community forest program has not only preserved forest. Women are empowered and backward people are getting benefits due to community forest. It has contributed for poverty reduction. Those helpless marginalized people have received both home and source of livelihood at once. Women has voluntary joined both in awareness creating campaign and forest conservation movement.

"Change is not possible within over night. It takes time. When you talk about the change seen in women's status after starting community forest it's quite different rather than the past. Earlier, women used to join forest related program just to listen other but now they have been raising agenda of their own right." says FECOFUN Central Working Committee member Nirmala Giri. "We have been implementing FECOFUN formulated constitution. Women are united and local problems are identified," says Manju Devi Khadayat FECOFUN Central Working Committee member.

Community forest program has preserved bio-diversity. Similarly, good governance is achieved. The establishment of forest based industries has promoted entrepreneurship, employment and independency. Women's active participation in forest conservation is heading community forest movement towards the height of success.

7. Policy Interaction

Protest against Government For Community Forestry Rights

There is close relationship between human beings and forest. Forest is not merely a source of fuel like woods and grass for livestock. The available herbs are really valuable for us but they are rarely used due to lack of awareness among local and government's effectiveness in its use. Realizing this fact FECOFUN has been intensifying its various activities in this effect for past

years. Given the context, FECOFUN organized a policy interaction program on Forest Restructuring in Hetauda. "We have been launching forest restructuring program mainly in three regions—Far-western, Western and Eastern region—simultaneously for restructuring forest. Four organizations working in the field of community forest like FECOFUN, Forest Action, Asmita Nepal and Nepal Foresters' Association are involved in this program," FECOFUN Central Working Committee (Secretary ?) Thakur Bhandari says.

FECOFUN has concluded that none of the policy and programs excluding community will be meaningless and awareness campaigns are organized from central to regional and local level to create awareness among consumers. When the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation is preparing to formulate new forest policy of the country FECOFUN aims to submit its final report prepared by incorporating public experience, opinions and suggestions. "In this program, we are mainly focused on two issues, First, we want to discuss on how pro-consumer rights will be ensured in the new constitution while statute writing process is going on Second, we want to make common understanding in forest restructuring specially among the political parties and stakeholders. Our discussion is also focused among the political parties, users and stakeholders," says Bhandari.

Currently, Forest Act-2049 and Wildlife Act-2029 are in practice for forest management. The concerned stakeholders stressed to unify both the acts reasoning that dual acts are not necessary in forest operation. Locals are facing trouble because of such dual practice, according to locals. FECOFUN says the government is piling more trouble amending Forest Act instead of merging both of them into one. "The caretaker government has tried takeover rights of local people from conserving the forest. Instead, the government should introduce unified Acts highlighting the role of locals," adds Thakur.

FECOFUN is working hard to ensure consumer's rights in the new constitution. It's coming program will focused on it. "No matter whether FECOFUN or locally formed user's group, we all have been actively involving in this movement. We yet want to intensify strong protest program against any anti-community move. Although there might be few problems within us, we will move ahead minimizing them. And, there is no doubt on it," says FECOFUN Treasure Bharati Pathak.

8. Ashmita Nepal

Empowerment of the local

Nepali women that cover half of country's total population are far behind in terms of empowerment. Despite rampant public speeches from all walks of life no significant changes are seen in practice. Consequently, women empowerment is still a matter of cry in Nepalese context.

Moreover, women remaining in rural area are yet unaware on empowerment and their rights. To avoid the same tendency Asmita Nepal, an NGO working in the field of rural women is actively involved in empowering women. "We have joined hand with different national and international organizations for empowering women. Our partnership is not a financial one but it is in terms of experience sharing for empowering women. We have been receiving both opportunities and sympathy from them," says Asmita Nepal chairperson Bharati Pathak. Established in 2055 BS Asmita Nepal has paid its significant role in empowering women. It was established in an effort to minimize effect of rampant woman trafficking in Makawanpur district. "We had established this institution comprising energetic youth women for minimizing women trafficking seen in the district. Our district is highly affected of women tracking," Nirmala Nneupane, Asmita Nepal Asmita Nepal initially collected data of women missing from the district. Thereby, it organized an interaction with the stakeholders. And, efforts are continuing as per its mission.

"We joined hands with UNICEF, GWP, District Development Committee and municipality. Similarly, we jointly worked with District Forest Office and income generation opportunities were created. Currently, Asmita Nepal and TEWA are jointly working in this filed and different measures are taken to empower women creating job opportunities," says Bharati. Asmita Nepal has played significant role in empowering women. "Asmita Nepal is advocating for meaningful participation of women in forest sector. We have raised our voice at the local, district and central level in this regard," says Aarati Pathak.

"We organized various program at local level and voices are raised in line to participated women in forest conservation as forest conservation is impossible without women participation. After our program, women themselves are leading the community forest user's on their own and separate women forest user's group are formed," Shanti Bidari. Makawanpur based kalika Chandi Women community Forest, which has been working in the field of women empowerment has become a model in the district. It has been creating job opportunities for women.

"We have taken various important steps in improving society and financial status of women. It would be so hard to gain all such achievement without this community forest. Let's hope we will move far ahead in this way." says Sher Singh Ling. "Community forest is our own not governmental. We must make it good and we must take its ownership. It's conservation and promotion is essential. It must be managed in sustainable way that why it can stay for longer. We all people are responsible for its bright future," Panchamaya Syangtyan. Established in 2054 BS, this community forest is helping in uplifting the status of local consumers. Bhaise Village Development Committee is also backing the activities of this community forest.

"A total of 42 people were trained with the view to enhance their income generation activities. Women are mobilized dividing them into seven groups for maintaining transparency, foresightness and institutional development." says Shiva Ram Thapa. "Since the Kalika Chandi Community Forest Users' Group was formed it has progressed a lot. The status of forest has been changed rather than past. VDC is also supporting its activities. We wish its better performance in the days ahead." Shankar Thapa "I want to inform that most activities are operated for women empowerment and income generation mainly targeting to women, dalits and marginalized community." Prakash Thapa. Out of 372 community forests registered in the Office of District Forest Darbardanda community forest is also noted in the district. This community forest, which covers total of 265 hectares of forest land, is continuing awareness campaign and income generation activities simultaneously.

9. Climate Change Conference Cancun and COP16 Preparation Meeting Commitment to Work for Women

From the very beginning of human being it has mutual relationship with the natural resources. Water resource, land and jungle are closely attached with human activities. Serious complexities are seen over mutual relationship between human being and natural resources like water, land and forest sectors all over the world due to growing climate change. FECOFUN is strongly raising its voice at the available local, national and international forum regarding the climate change adaptation and mitigation. Given the context, COP-16 is going to be organized at Cancun of Mexico from Nov 28 to Dec 10. Prior to this, FECOFUN organized an interaction program in Kathmandu aimed to make common understanding on burning issues including effect of climate change on women and mountain countries. It's essential to prioritize women issues at the Conference as women are mostly victimized due to climate change.

"Last year, we many Nepalese delegates working in forest sector had participated in Cop-15 organized in Denmark. Nepalese climate change experts were actively involved in COP-15 and we discussed on it. Like today climate change remained hot issue but no concrete outputs were gained at that time. In Cop 16 we will highlight the role of women in forest conservation and effect of climate change. As you know FECOFUN is working hard to provide carbon finance to local consumers. We want to go beyond this. The total of budget received as climate change adaptation should be allocated for women equally. It's our demand," says FECOFUN Treasurer Bharati Pathak.

Most Least Developed Country (LDC)s are highly affected because of climate change. Among them women are seen as its first victim. To minimize climate change risk and raise voice for their own opportunities women organization working in the field of climate change formed a network as well.

"Before Cancun departure women organizations working in the field of climate change like Jagaran Nepal, FECOFUN, Asmita Nepal among other discussed on women's issue related to climate change. In Cancun we will our concern for women friendly raid. We will also participate in global forum organized from civil society forum. The state should also come up with concrete decision over such issue. We women organizations will again discuss over the issue again once when return from there," says NGO Federation General Secretary Sharmila karki. Women organizations are stressing to take women friendly policy in Cop 16. It is supposed that Cop-16 will be focused on REED+.

"It appears that Cop-16 will be mainly focused on four points—unresolved issued at Cop-15, climate change mitigation, adoption and finance aid. Among them no progress is seen in REED+." says GACF Coordinator Ghan Shyam Pandey.

"Climate change issues that remained unresolved in Cop-15 meet will be discussed in Cancun with high priority. How G8 reduces effect of climate change. This issue will be also discussed inn depth." says Karki. Rural women are seen as first victims of climate change. Food security has emerged as genuine problem them.

"Those women working in rural are deprived of sufficient food. Consequently, problems like malnutrition, uterine prolapse are quite common for them," says Karki. Many have promised Cancun will take concrete initiative regarding women related climate change issues.