

For Stakeholders

# GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



Government of Nepal  
Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation  
Department of Forests  
Community Forest Division  
2009



**GUIDELINES**  
**FOR**  
**COMMUNITY FORESTRY**  
**DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Government of Nepal  
Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation  
Department of Forests  
**Community Forest Division**

2009

## **Unofficial Translation**

First Revision: 2001  
Second Revision: 2009

Approved on 2009/04/01 by the Government of Nepal (Hon. Minister level)

**Publisher :**  
**Community Forest Division**  
Department of Forests  
Babarmahal, Kathmandu

Printed :  
Sigma General Offset Press  
Sanepa, Sanchal, Lalitpur  
Phone : 5554029

Government of Nepal  
**Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation**

## **Preface**

Guidelines for Community Forestry Development Programme were introduced and implemented in 1996 (B.S. 2052) with the aim of providing simplicity in implementing community forestry development programmes and maintaining consistency in the implementation process. Community forestry is an evolving process that has gained momentum since its inception. In 2001 (B.S. 2058), the guidelines were revised for the first time after interaction with all the stakeholders to suit the changes in the community and the community forestry.

Keeping in mind the ongoing political, social and economic changes of the country, a working group was formed with representatives from government, non-government and civil society to make community forestry process even more inclusive, transparent, pro-poor and participatory. I am confident that “Guidelines for Community Forestry Development Programmes (Revised) 2009”, which is prepared in accordance with current policies, acts, and rules after interaction with all the stakeholders both at field and national level, will uplift the community forestry development programme to the zenith.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the active members of the working group as well as all those who have been involved directly or indirectly in preparing the guidelines.

Dr. Uday Raj Sharma  
Secretary, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation



## **Foreword**

Nepal has gained three decades of experience in community forestry development programme. On the basis of this experience, the guidelines for community forestry development programme have been revised with time to make the programme more effective.

Continuing this process, a working group was formed with the leadership of Department of Forests involving representatives from Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal, Himawanti Nepal, Community Forestry Supporter's Network, Forest Action, Livelihoods and Forestry Programme, Nepal Swiss Community Forestry Project, Care Nepal and then Nepal Australia Community Resources Management and Livelihood Programme to revise the guidelines for Community Forestry Development Programme and make forest users groups more inclusive, transparent, pro-poor and participatory and for equitable distribution of benefits accrued from the sustainable management of the forests to all the users especially the poor and excluded groups. The group paid visits to 12 districts in the process of collecting suggestions and recommendations from the members of forest user groups, members of user committee and representatives from users' network, officials from Department of Forests and other district level stakeholders. Similarly, regional workshops involving field level staff, facilitators, resource person and representatives from various networks and national workshop involving stakeholders from the centre and the district were held. The guidelines were, thus, revised based on recommendations of these workshops and declaration of the fifth National Workshop on Community Forestry.

I would like to thank Mr. Bala Ram Kandel, Ms. Apsara Chapagain, Mr. Ramu Subedi, Ms. Kamala Sharma, Mr. Bholu Khatiwada, Mr. Man Bahadur Khadka, Dr. Netra Timsina, Mr. Padam Bahadur Chand, Mr. Dinesh Paudel, Mr. Bramha Dhoj Gurung, Mr. Ramhari Khadka, Mr. Popular Gentle and all organizations and members who were involved directly or indirectly in revising the guidelines. I would also like to express my gratitude to Livelihoods and Forestry Programme, Nepal Swiss Community Forestry Project, CARE Nepal, World Wildlife Fund Nepal, Micro Enterprise Development Programme and then Nepal Australia Community Resource Management and Livelihood Programme for their financial and technical support.

Finally, I am positive that "Guidelines for Community Forestry Development Programme (Revised) 2009" will encourage the user groups for the sustainable management of community forests and the benefits from this will support the livelihood of the rural communities. I believe the guidelines will make significant contribution towards conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, biodiversity, and the natural environment.

Dr. Krishna Chandra Paudel  
Director General, Department of Forests

### **Guidelines for Whom?**

This guideline 2009 is prepared to be used by all the stakeholders involved in the Community Forestry Development Programmes.

The processes outlined in this guideline needs to be followed while forming forest user group as well as preparing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the constitution and operational plan of community forests.

# Glossary

**Operational Plan:** A plan prepared by the forest user group and approved by the District Forest Officer for the protection and management of community forests as well as for the utilization, sale and distribution of forest products to improve the livelihood of users maintaining environmental balance at the same time.

**Constitution:** A compilation of rules and regulations prepared on the basis of general consensus by the forest user group to manage the group and its activities.

**Poor Group:** Those who are or have been left behind in terms of access and control over financial, social, physical, human and natural resources.

**Traditional Users:** Communities that have been utilizing forest area since ancient times according to their local rituals, culture and tradition.

**Livelihood:** Activities related to capacity building, access to resources and employment or vocation that provides a way to earn a living.

**Spider's Web:** A process used to evaluate the situation of a group in a participatory manner.

**Excluded Group:** Users who did not have the opportunity to get involved in development process and have limited or no access to resources.

**Forestry Technician:** A person having certificate from institute of forestry who can provide technical support, advice, and training to user groups for the management of community forest.

**Forest Management:** Activities carried out in community forest to increase the production and productivity of the forest.

**Forest Resource Inventory:** Measurement carried out in the forests to collect information about the number of plants, its size, condition of forest products etc. On the basis of information thus collected, the condition of the forest, annual increment and annual allowable cut can be estimated.

**Distant Users:** Users who live far away from a community forest and cannot get involved directly on forest protection and management but depend on the same forest for the forest products.

**Facilitator:** Forestry technician, trained or experienced person who provides support to manage the user groups and community forests according to their needs and demands. This word also denotes to local resource person, animator, motivator, social mobiliser etc.

**Positive Discrimination:** Actions for the upliftment of designated groups who have been alienated from the services available in the community.

**Well-being Ranking:** A procedure used by the user group to categorise its members on the basis of financial, social, physical and human capital as well as access and control over the natural resources.

**Group Network:** A mechanism to develop linkage among various user groups to obtain a specific objective.

**Enrichment Plantation:** Additional plantation to improve regeneration of community forest.





# Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>Foreword</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>Chapter I</b>	
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter II</b>	
<b>2. Identification and Empowerment</b>	<b>2-5</b>
2.1 Formation of supporting committee and distribution of responsibilities	2
2.2 Identification of user households and forest area	2
2.3 Empowerment of users	4
2.4 Identification of poor and interest groups	5
<b>Chapter III</b>	
<b>3. User group formation and registration</b>	<b>6-9</b>
3.1 Analysis of information	6
3.2 Discussion among interest groups	6
3.3 Discussion with the members of poor and exclude groups	6
3.4 Discussion with elite members	7
3.5 Settlement/ <i>Tole</i> meeting/discussion	7
3.6 Preparation of framework of the constitution	7
3.7 Approval of framework of the constitution	7
3.8 User group registration	8
<b>Chapter IV</b>	
<b>4. Preparation and registration of operational plan</b>	<b>10-12</b>
4.1 Preparation of action plan	10
4.2 Preparation of participatory resource map	10
4.3 Participatory observation of forest resources	10
4.4 Data analysis	10
4.5 Forest boundary survey	10
4.6 Resource inventory and analysis	10
4.7 Environmental benefits	11
4.8 Interest group and <i>Tole</i> meetings	11
4.9 Approval of operational plan at the general assembly	12
4.10 Approval of operational plan and forest handover	12

## **Chapter V**

<b>5. Implementation of constitution and forest operational plan</b>	<b>13-17</b>
5.1 Preparation and implementation of annual plan	13
5.2 Strengthening good governance	13
5.3 Pro-poor livelihood	14
5.4 Sustainable management of forest	15
5.5 Development of forest based enterprises	15
5.6 Coordination with other agencies	16
5.7 Human and institutional development of the group	16
5.8 Formation of group network	17
5.9 Self-monitoring and evaluation of the group	17

## **Chapter VI**

<b>6. Revision of constitution and operational plan</b>	<b>18-20</b>
6.1. Categorisation and prioritisation of the community forest for the revision of operational plan	18
6.2 Review of constitution and operational plan	18
6.3 Revision of constitution and operational plan	19
6.4 Endorsement of the revised constitution and operational plan at the general assembly	20
6.5 Inform District Forest Office about revised constitution	20
6.6 Approval of the revised operational plan from District Forest Office	20
6.7 Monitoring and record keeping	20

## **Chapter VII**

<b>7. Role of stakeholders in community forestry process</b>	<b>21-25</b>
7.1 Community Forest User Group	21
7.2 Community Forest User Committee	22
7.3 Facilitator	22
7.4 Range Post, Area ( <i>Ilaka</i> ) Forest Office and District Forests Office	22
7.5 Group Network	23
7.6 Non-government Organization	24
7.7 Local Body (VDC/DDC)	24
7.8 Forestry Projects	24
7.9 Government Agencies (Central and Regional)	25

<b>Annexes</b>	<b>26-66</b>
Annex 1. : Data collection format for household survey	27
Annex 2. : Points to be mentioned in the constitution	28
Annex 3. : Some programmes targeted to the poor, women, <i>Dalit</i> , <sup>29</sup> indigenous people and ethnic groups	29
Annex 4. : Application format for user group registration	30
Annex 5. : Format for agreement to be done at the time of registration of forest user group	31
Annex 6. : Format for user group registration certificate	32
Annex 7. : List of activities that can be implemented in the community forest	33
Annex 8. : Important point to be included in the operational plan	38
Annex 9. : Application format for community forest registration	42
Annex 10.: Format for agreement at the time of registration of community forest	43
Annex 11. : Format for community forest registration certificate	46
Annex 12. : Format for cover page of operational plan	47
Annex 13. : Format for agreement between the Community Forest User Group and the poor group	48
Annex 14. : Format for agreement to provide community forest land to the poor users for income generating activities	52
Annex 15. : Community Forest User Group Monitoring Format	54

# Chapter I

## 1. Introduction

Although the people of Nepal have been directly involved in the management of forests since early times, the National Forestry Plan 1976 symbolises its importance. On the basis of this Plan, a process to decentralise rights and responsibilities of forest management to the local political bodies was instigated in 1977 with the amendment of Forest Act 1961. On the basis of experiences and learning gained from this participatory process of forest management, policy has been tailored from time to time.

The need to handover forest to the group of traditional users was pointed out during the First National Workshop on Community Forestry held on 1987. The Master Plan for the Forestry Sector prepared in 1987 has considered community forestry as a priority programme putting an emphasis on people's participation in forest management.

The Second National Workshop on Community Forestry held on 1993, further recommended that there should be bottom up planning, development of human resource, networking of forest users and involvement of non-government organizations in the development of community forestry. Forest Act 1993 and Forest Regulation 1995, which were prepared and enforced after the reinstatement of democracy in 1990, have established community forest user groups as independent and self governing entity with perpetual succession and have given the responsibility for the development, protection, utilization and management of forests. Since the responsibility for group formation and operational plan preparation was given to the forest user groups according to the Forest Act 1993 and Forest Regulation 1995, Guidelines for Community Forestry Development Programme was prepared and put into practice in 1996 to clarify the community forestry process and to bring uniformity in the programme implementation.

The Third National Workshop on Community Forestry held on 1999 visualised the role of other stakeholders beside the government organization and the contribution that community forestry can make in poverty reduction. These findings were incorporated in the revised Guidelines for Community Forestry Development Programme, 2001. The Tenth Plan and Three Year Interim Plan emphasises that protection, development and utilization of forest resources can contribute to poverty reduction. A similar view was expressed in the Fourth National Workshop on Community Forestry held on 2004. It was further recommended that second generation issues of community forestry such as sustainable forest management, good governance and livelihoods should be addressed to contribute to the national goal of poverty reduction.

The Guidelines for Community Forestry Development Programme (Second Revision) 2009 have incorporated all the recommendations and commitments made during the Fifth National Workshop on Community Forestry held on 2008 to ensure active participation and guarantee the rights of poor, women, *Dalit*, *Madeshi*, indigenous and ethnic groups and traditional users on community forest resources. Similarly, the guidelines were revised to implement the provisions agreed on I.L.O 169 after consultation and interaction with all the stakeholders from the field to the national level.

# Chapter II

## 2. Identification and Empowerment

This chapter mentions the process of identifying user households and forest area as well as empowerment of users. Before the identification of user households, it is important that the potential users involve themselves in discussions to be clear about the existing forest policies, laws as well as their rights and responsibilities. It is also necessary to be familiar with the demand and need of the forest products, their utilization and the socio-economic conditions of the users.

The necessary steps for the identification of users and forest area and empowerment of users are listed below.

### 2.1 Formation of supporting committee and distribution of responsibilities

After the identification of potential community forest area, users discuss among themselves and form a supporting committee for the preparation of the constitution and operational plan. The committee, thus, formed should represent members from all *Toles* including poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people, ethnic groups and other minorities. The committee can either work itself or form another committee to revise the constitution or operational plan.

The following things should be done while forming a committee:

- Inform potential users
- Discuss the process of forming Community Forest User Groups
- Discuss the necessity and importance of community forest
- Form a supporting committee to prepare constitution and operational plan with consensus of all users

The supporting committee will prepare and implement a work schedule for the preparation of the constitution and operational plan and seek assistance from other relevant agencies as required.

### 2.2 Identification of user households and forest area

Households of the traditional users of a potential community forest should be identified. Users should be identified irrespective of their ward, village, district or zone. Special attention should be given to include all users and this can be done by talking to neighboring households. Identification of user households and forest area should be done in coordination with local bodies, District Forest Sector Coordination Committee, traditional institutions of indigenous and ethnic groups as well as intellectuals and other organizations. The boundaries of the potential community forest area should be determined at this time.

*Note: If the land is owned by corporate bodies, Village Development Committee, Road and Irrigation Department, government owned barren land, grazing land and other public land that is accessible to the community, the District Forest Officer may grant recognition to such areas as a community forest after obtaining the approval of the agency owning the land on the condition that the concerned agency itself retains the ownership of the land.*

Depending on the situation, the following points can be considered while identifying the users:

- Households that are traditional users of the forest
- Households that are close to the forest
- Households that are interested to get involved in the user group
- Households that depend on the forest for forest products
- Households that can contribute to the protection and management of forest
- Households that are distant users of the forest and have no other alternatives for forest products but can contribute to forest management

#### **The process for identifying distant users**

Several questions, related to distant users may arise while identifying users and forest area in Tarai. Hence, distant users related to or dependent on the forest should be consulted from the beginning and included in the discussion process. Discussion should be made with the distant users about their contributions, benefit sharing mechanism and expected output from the community forest. Similarly distant users who were left out should be involved in the user group by building consensus among users while revising the constitution and operational plan of the community forest. User identification should not disregard the traditional use rights of any individual.

Depending on the situation, the basis for identification of community forest can be as follows:

- Forest that is traditionally being used
- Forest that can be protected and managed by the community

Here are a few ways to provide support distant users that cannot get involved regularly in the protection and management of community forest by classifying them based on their contribution towards protection of forest and utilization of forest products.

- Providing forest products at subsidised rate
- Establishing forest product depot at an area away from the forest
- Providing support in seedling production and distribution
- Providing support in plantation on open areas
- Providing support in community development activities
- Mobilizing user group fund for income generation activities

Below is a list of tasks for the identification of users and forest area:

- Prepare a social as well as a resource map with participation of individuals from each *Tole* representing all castes, ethnic group, gender, elderly people and others who have knowledge about forests.
- After preparing the map, discuss about the desired condition of the forest in future by evaluating the present status of community and the forest and their relationship.
- Prepare a list of households involved in the user group with membership number or household number.
- Resolve any dispute related to user identification through mutual understanding. If not, resolve it by building general consensus following the process of empowerment.
- Remain vigilant to ensure no users are left out

### **2.3 Empowerment of users**

In this process, there should be broad discussion with the members of all households in each *Tole* about forest policies and laws, legal and social recognition of community forestry, the rights and responsibilities of users, and the process of community forestry. People from the surrounding areas should be involved in the discussion to make sure they are not left out. At the same time, all the information needed for the formulation of constitution and operational plan should be collected. The format for collecting this information is given in annex 1.

Subject matters to be discussed in the process of user empowerment

- Current policy related to community forestry
- Laws related to community forestry
- Duties, rights and responsibilities of the users
- Traditional system of forest management
- Dependency on forest resources
- Constitution and operational plan formation process
- Contribution that community forests can make in the livelihood of poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups.
- Good practices within the community
- Key features of community forestry (peoples participation, general consensus, equity, gender equity and equality, livelihood, access and right to resources, integrated management of resources, transparency, sustainable management of forest etc.)

Materials that can be used in empowerment process:

- Forest Act chapter 4, 9 and Forest Regulations chapter 5,13
- Executive Summary of the Master Plan for Forestry Sector



- Directives and Guidelines for Community Forestry
- Community Forest Inventory Guideline 2004
- Thinning Guidelines 2007
- Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy for Forestry Sector 2007
- Posters and pamphlets related to group formation and duties, rights and responsibilities of user group/users
- Household information collection format

## 2.4 Identification of poor and interest groups

It is vital to identify interest groups in order to support poverty reduction through community forestry. Likewise, it is essential to formulate policies and plan to have equitable distribution of resources and increase access of poor and women in decision making process. The identification of these groups should also be done by the community itself.

Things to be done during identification:

- Discuss the requirement and relevance of identifying poor groups
- Participatory well-being ranking (Social, economic, physical, natural and human resources should be the basis for well being ranking. Those with limited access and control over resources are identified as poor groups).
- Identify small interest groups (such as: goat farming, herbal plant cultivation, charcoal making etc.)

### **Well-being ranking**

The households involved in the forest user group are generally from various socio-economic backgrounds and have varying problems, needs and potential. Therefore, users having different socio-economic conditions should be identified and the programs/plans should be designed accordingly. For this purpose, households should be identified to categorise them into poor, medium and rich through participatory well-being ranking. The basis for this ranking/categorization should be decided by the users themselves. Within the poor group, ultra-poor households should be identified and special programmes should be targeted towards these households. Facilitators should provide support in facilitating the process if necessary. After the ranking/ categorization has been done, the result should be mentioned in the constitution. Finally, the facilitators should work with the users of the poor group to design programs/plans according to their interest, needs and potential. Benefits that can be provided equitably to the users thus identified from the resources available in the group should be stated in the constitution.

# Chapter III

## 3. User group formation and registration

This chapter includes the process of forming the user group, preparing the constitution and registering the group. A framework of the constitution should be prepared based on the information obtained in the process of user identification and empowerment. A draft constitution should be prepared in coordination and discussion with women, *Dalit*, poor, indigenous people and ethnic groups, close and distant users, traditional institutions of the indigenous and ethnic groups and interest groups. The draft, thus prepared should be presented at a general assembly and approved upon consensus.

### 3.1 Analysis of information

There should be a detailed analysis of information obtained from household visit/survey and *Tole* meetings/interaction.. The analysis should focus on the number of households, family size, number of livestock, socio-economic condition, occupation, education level, human resource, demand and supply of forest products, problems faced by users etc. Some households may have special problems or interests; these things should be taken into consideration while analyzing the information. Conclusion from the analysis should be included in the constitution after having discussion with interest groups and *Tole* meeting. This information can also be useful in preparing the operational plan.

### 3.2 Discussion among interest groups

Separate discussions with poor, women, *Dalit*, *Madhesi*, indigenous people, ethnic groups, distant users and other excluded groups should be held about the points that have to be included in the constitution. Besides the problems of these groups, a brief note of the points that have to be included in the constitution should be prepared. These small group discussions should be held in an environment where every member can express their views. Members of these interest groups should be encouraged to convey their ideas in the general assembly without any hesitation. Considering the needs of users and available resources, provision should be made in the constitution to prepare a possible livelihoods plan

### 3.3 Discussion with members of poor and excluded group

The problems, needs, interests and capacities of these excluded groups may be different. These differences may not be openly discussed or heard in large groups. Therefore, these groups should meet separately to include their problems and needs in the constitution. Users from poor and excluded groups should be made aware of their rights to the benefits from community forest. This will enable users to voice their opinions in small groups. During these small group discussions/meetings, all the points to be included in the constitution should be discussed and noted. An appropriate plan should be designed sitting together with these groups considering their needs and capacity. This plan should not be limited to forestry - rather it should incorporate other relevant subjects. These group discussions should be held in an environment where all members are comfortable to convey their ideas without hesitation.

### **3.4 Discussion with elite members**

The role of elite members of the community could be essential in order to make this process more inclusive and effective. It would be appropriate to seek their support if, after discussion, they agree with a rights-based approach.

### **3.5 Settlement/*Tole* meeting/discussion**

Users are scattered in various settlements and *Tole* and their problems, forest product needs, interests and issues related to *Tole* development are also different. These diverse ideas may not get raised in large group discussions. Subjects to be incorporated in the constitution should, therefore, be discussed in detail with users at *Tole*/settlement level. There may be separate plans in the each *Tole*/settlement after these discussions/meetings. All the members from the *Tole* including women, *Dalit*, indigenous people ethnic groups, *Madhesi*, poor and excluded groups should participate in the *Tole*/settlement meetings/discussions. Appropriate times and a venue for the meeting should also be kept in mind to accommodate all the members.

### **3.6 Preparation of framework of the constitution**

A framework of the constitution should be prepared based on the analysis of points and issues raised during small group meetings. The framework should incorporate the information received from household surveys, small group discussions and *Tole* meetings. Any difference in opinion should be noted and there should be discussion among concerned parties before the general assembly. While preparing the framework, there should be provisions to address the interests, needs and problems of the poor and excluded groups.

All users should be informed about the time and venue prior to the general assembly. Concerned stakeholders and supporting agencies should also be invited. Sufficient preparation should be done for conducting general assembly. The time and venue of the general assembly should be appropriate for all the users, especially women, *Dalit*, poor and excluded groups. The environment of the general assembly should be conducive so that users can participate actively. While forming forest user group and preparing the constitution, all concerned stakeholders including Range Post, Federation of Forest User Groups, teachers, informants, local bodies, Local Resource Person and facilitators should be consulted for additional information, recommendation and assistance. Subjects to be mentioned in the constitution are given in annex 2.

### **3.7 Approval of framework of constitution**

As mentioned above, a general assembly should be organised to finalise the constitution based on the analysis of information received during discussion with different types of users at different stages. If the number of users in a group is very big, an arrangement could be made to send representatives from each *Tole*/settlement to participate in the general assembly. The constitution should be passed after all the points in the draft are discussed and a consensus is reached. If there are differences in opinion on certain points, consensus should be reached after having discussion with concerned parties. While organizing the general assembly, active

participation of all users especially poor, women, *Dalit* should be ensured. In the general assembly, an environment should be created so that participation of poor, women and *Dalit* reaches at least 50 percent. Participation of at least one woman and one man should be encouraged from each household. Similarly, the facilitators should bring up the views and concerns of these users if they are unable to do so. Sitting arrangements should be made to bring users from the same *Tole* and interest group together during general assembly. This may help to facilitate the discussions.

#### **Formation of User Committee**

A user committee should be formed at the general assembly. Proportionate representation of all categories of users such as poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups should be ensured while forming user committee. There should be mandatory provision of at least 50 percent women representatives in the committee representing poor, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups. Remaining 50 percent should include proportionate representatives from poor, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups. Either the chairperson or the secretary of the committee should be a woman. Arrangement should be made to include representatives from all *Toles* in the committee. Selection of committee members should be done based on general consensus. The members, thus, selected should express their commitment at the general assembly. All the members of the user committee will be regarded as personnel bearing public positions.

The committee can form various sub-committees as necessary such as *Tole*, income generation, monitoring, fund mobilization etc. and assign duties, responsibilities and rights.

*Note: The user Group should make decisions based on general consensus of all categories of users including poor, women, Dalit, indigenous people and ethnic groups. While mentioning the details of users' household in the constitution, a total of two members – one man and one woman - should represent each household and the number of household members should be mentioned as users. Provisions should be made to ensure that one man and one woman from each household are represented in the decision making process. The constitution should also state the need to hold a general assembly while making decisions regarding sale of forest products outside the user group.*

Special programmes should be organised for poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups. Details regarding this are given in annex 3.

### **3.8 User Group registration**

The user group should submit an application along with the constitution to the District Forest Office in order to register the group. A copy of the decisions of the general assembly should be provided along with the application form as shown in annex 4. The District Forest Office should register the group and issue the group registration certificate after having made an agreement with the group as per annex 5. The District Forest Officer may inspect on any matter or consult with local facilitators and other forestry staff before issuing the certificate. A

certificate should be issued within 30 days of receiving the application. If user group cannot be registered within this period, District Forest Officer should inform the user group and provide a written statement listing the reasons for refusal within 30 days. The assigned code number after the registration of the community forest should also be mentioned in the constitution. A format for the user group registration certificate is depicted in annex 6.

### ***Fund mobilization***

Special effort should be made to ensure that the user group fund is mobilised as well as utilised in a transparent and equitable manner. An annual plan should be prepared considering existing user group funds and potential income for that year. The user group fund should be mobilised only after the approval of the general assembly. The activities mentioned in annex 7 could be the basis for planning.

Out of the total income earned from the implementation of operational plan, at least 25 percent should be used for the development, protection, and management of community forest. Similarly, 35 percent of the income should be mobilised for the programmes targeted to the poor (women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups) as identified from participatory well-being ranking. The remaining amount should be spent on other community development works as per the annual plan approved by the general assembly. The group fund/account should be operated with the joint signatures of either the chairperson or the secretary and the treasurer of the group. It is also mandatory that one of the signatory should be a woman.

The income and expenditure along with other major decisions should be made public immediately after the general assembly and committee meetings. Additionally, there should be public auditing of income, expenditure and decisions of the group at least once in a year. In case of the groups having annual income up to Rs. 25,000, auditing can be done by an individual or a committee appointed by the user group but for groups having more income, auditing should be done by a registered auditor. The general assembly of the group should appoint the auditor. The audit report should be submitted either to the Range Post or Area (*Ilaka*) Forest Office or directly to the District Forest Office within a given period. Action will be taken on Committee members who fail to make the submission on time according to law.

# Chapter IV

## 4. Preparation and registration of operational plan

This chapter explains the process of preparing an operational plan. The information gained after analysing forest resources, socio-economic condition and environmental status and other relevant issues including forest products and their demand and supply are discussed in interest groups and *Tole* meeting. The operational plan thus, prepared based on the information gained from these discussions is approved at the general assembly.

This includes following steps.

### 4.1 Preparation of action plan

An action plan should be prepared and implemented based on discussions among users to perform the task from 4.2 to 4.8 (who, when, how, where to do) before an operational plan is prepared.

### 4.2 Preparation of participatory resource map

A participatory resource map needs to be prepared involving supporting committees and users' representatives from whole areas. All the available resources both in the community and the forests should be identified and analysed in order to prepare the map. After preparing the map, the community can discuss to determine the vision or desired conditions of the community and the forest in the future.

### 4.3 Participatory observation of forest resources

A thorough observation of the forest area should be done involving supporting committees and users' representatives from whole areas. While observing the forest area, detailed information about the available resources should be noted and possible management activities should be discussed. It is helpful to carry the participatory resource map all along observation.

### 4.4 Data analysis

Facts and figures about social, economic, human, natural and physical resources gathered while preparing the constitution should be analysed. Forest products needs, livelihood improvement and community development status should be analysed for each group and *Tole*. The outcomes of the analysis should be used in preparing the operational plan.

### 4.5 Forest boundary survey

A map obtained from the Survey Office should be used for forest boundary survey of the proposed community forests. For this purpose GPS or Compass can be used.

### 4.6 Resource survey and analysis

The following actions should be carried out while doing resource survey:

- Keep records according to *Tole* and interest group after detailed analysis of the information obtained from the household survey.
- Divide the community forest into blocks, sub-blocks and working units according to the needs of the group, condition of the forests and forest management objectives.
- Determine annual allowable cut after calculating growing stock and annual increment for each block and sub-block using the community forest inventory guidelines.
- Pay attention to environmental, economic and social aspects while preparing operational plan.
- Determine the number of trees to be cut annually applying thinning regime based on the total number of standing trees in the plantation and the natural forest
- Identify the silvicultural operations such as singling, cleaning, pruning, thinning etc. after analysing the quantity of the forest products that can be harvested annually from the forest to meet the demand of the users. While carrying out these activities it is necessary to protect important non timber forest products and other useful plants.
- Explore alternatives to meet the demands for forest products. For instance, private plantation, improved cook stove, solar, biogas, briquette, etc

While carrying out boundary survey and resource inventory, open discussion should be held about the types of enterprises that can be established. Areas that can be provided to the groups of poor people for income generation activities should also be identified at this stage. It is also useful to carry out a detailed survey of forest products required to establish forest based enterprises. A brief description should be kept in the operational plan after analysing the information received from resource inventory. For example squash of Bel (*Aegle marmelos*), Kaphal (*Myrica esculenta*), Lali Gurans (*Rhododendron spp.*), oil from *Ghasingare*, thread from *Aallo*, leaf plates, briquette, Lokta (*Daphne spp.*) paper, bamboo and rattans etc. A separate file should be created keeping all these documents.

#### 4.7 Environmental benefits

Various environmental services such as watershed and biodiversity conservation, landscape beauty as well as carbon-sequestration can be obtained from the sustainable management of community forest. The possibilities of these benefits should be sought and utilised for income generation purposes.

#### 4.8 Interest group and *Tole* meetings

The information obtained from resource analysis should be shared during *Tole* meetings and interest group meetings. These discussions should also focus on the needs of poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups and distant users for forest products. The user Committee should then discuss about the content to be included in the operational plan. This should be discussed at the general assembly and passed after a consensus is reached. Important topics that have to be mentioned in the operational plan are listed in annex 8.

#### **4.9 Approval of operational plan at the general assembly**

Subjects discussed during village, *Tole* and interest group meetings should be brought to the general assembly. The approval of these matters should be based on consensus. The process should be similar to the one followed while preparing the constitution. Attention should be given to incorporate all the topics in the discussion. Members of the Forest User Group can also consult with the District Forest Office while preparing the operational plan. Depending on the condition of the forest, the operational plan period can be between 5 to 10 years.

#### **4.10 Approval of operational plan and forest handover**

If the user group desires to have part of the National Forest as Community Forest, they need to submit an application in the format presented in annex 9 along with an operational plan approved by the general assembly. The application has to be signed by the chairperson of the user group and submitted either to the Range Post or Area (*Ilaka*) Forest Office or District Forest Office. The District Forest Officer should make necessary inquiries about the operational plan before approval and registration of the community forest. If the operational plan contradicts the Forest Act or Forest Regulations, District Forest Officer should send it back to the user group within 30 days. The user group should then discuss the subjects pointed out by District Forest Officer and revise the operational plan as per the decisions of the group. The revised operational plan should be submitted to the District Forest Office for approval. District Forest Officer should approve the operational plan within 30 days. If the plan cannot be approved within this period, a written statement should be given to the user group. Once the operational plan is approved, District Forest Officer should provide a community forest registration certificate as shown in annex 11 after making an agreement with the user group in the format given in annex 10. Immediately after this a completed data base form should be sent to the Department of Forests.

A copy of the approved operational plan should be available to the user group, respective Range Post, Area (*Ilaka*) Forest Office, District Forest Office and Regional Forest Directorate. Community forests that have been recognised based on the conditions stated on point 2.2 of Chapter 2 have to send a copy of the operational plan to the organization that owns the land.

A sample of the cover page of the operational plan is given in annex 12. The cover page should include the national database code number.



# Chapter V

## 5. Implementation of constitution and forest operational plan

The chapter includes the process that has to be followed by the user group while implementing the constitution and forest operational plan. After handing over the forest, the committee should regularly visit the *Tole* and interest groups to explain to them the provisions in the constitution and operational plan. The group can take assistance from local resource persons while doing so. It can be effective to include forestry staff and other stakeholders involved in community forestry development programme in the discussion.

The following steps should be taken while implementing the constitution and operational plan of the community forest.

### 5.1 Preparation and implementation of annual plan

An annual plan should be prepared based on the expected income, proposed expenditure and available resources of the group. The annual plan includes forest management programmes, trainings/workshops/study tours to build the capacity of group members, livelihoods improvement programmes for the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups and institutional and community development programmes. The annual programme should be prepared incorporating ideas from all *Tole* and interest groups. The programme thus prepared should be implemented after the approval of the general assembly.

### 5.2 Strengthening good governance

In order to strengthen good governance, users should not only be aware of their rights but also fulfill their responsibilities. Strengthened good governance of the user group helps to improve transparency and accountability of other service providers.

The following actions should be carried out for strengthening good governance:

- Indicators should be identified to strengthen good governance in the group. Based on these indicators, a good governance strengthening plan should be prepared after discussion at the general assembly. For this, the spider's web method can also be used.
- A public hearing as well as public auditing should be conducted at least once a year to inform users about group programmes, income, expenditure, sale and distribution of forest products, group decisions and its implementation status.
- Users should be informed about income, expenditure, programmes and decisions of the group on a regular basis by posting information in public places. There should also be discussions among group members from time to time.
- The decision making process should include poor, women, disabled, *Dalits*, indigenous people and ethnic groups, and special attention should be given to develop leadership of these groups. There should be provisions for positive discrimination for these groups such

as special consideration for their representation in the committee, and special opportunities of capacity development.

- Sub-committees should be formed as necessary for the sale and distribution of forest products, organization of community development programmes and dissemination of information about programme to the users on regular basis.
- A monitoring committee should be formed to monitor all the programmes of the group in a participatory way. The committee should include poor, women, *Dalit* members of the group.
- Achievements and investments received by the poor selected on the basis of well being ranking should be reviewed and analysed at least every six months.

### 5.3 Pro-poor livelihood

In order to make pro-poor livelihood programmes more effective, programmes that ensure the rights of poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups should be implemented. The user committee will organise different programmes to strengthen economic empowerment and distribute forest products at subsidised rates or free of charge to the poor, women, *Dalits*, indigenous people and ethnic groups on an equitable basis.

The following actions should be carried out to improve the social and economic condition of the poor, women, *Dalits*, indigenous people and ethnic groups through livelihood improvement programmes:

- The annual plan should include material as well as financial support to be provided to the poor households. A written agreement should be made between the poor group and the forest user group. The format for this agreement is given in annex 13. If part of the forest area is to be provided to the poor for improving their livelihoods, an agreement should be made between the poor group and the user group as per the format given in annex 14. A livelihoods plan should also be prepared after this.
- A livelihoods plan should be prepared based on the available material, financial and other resources to the poor. There should also be an assessment of their potentialities, abilities, interests, skills and the market. If necessary, the group can seek assistance from the District Forest Office and other supporting agencies for this purpose.
- The group should provide materials as well as financial support to implement the livelihood plans of the poor households.
- A report should be provided to the District Forest Office and other supporting agencies after monitoring and evaluation of the support provided to the poor, women, *Dalit* indigenous people and ethnic groups through the livelihood improvement programme.
- The programmes intended for the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups should be able to uplift the socio-economic status of these groups in the long run.

## 5.4 Sustainable management of forest

Having a sustainable forest management not only fulfills the needs of the group but also helps in sale and distribution of surplus forest products outside the community.

As mentioned in the operational plan of the community forest, the following actions should be taken to increase forest products through sustainable forest management:

- **Forest protection:** Protect the forest against cattle grazing, forest fire, illegal cutting, encroachment, etc.
- **Silvicultural operation:** Improve the condition of the forest through activities like cleaning and plantation in bare areas, enrichment plantation, natural regeneration management, silvicultural operations (singling, thinning, removing dead dying and diseased trees). Biodiversity should be taken care of while doing silvicultural operations. Local indigenous species should be given priority while planting trees and herbal plants in community forests. It is also helpful to use the Thinning Guidelines during thinning operations.
- **Forest product utilization:** Forest products should be utilised based on the annual allowable harvest mentioned in the operational plan.

Surplus forest products can be sold and distributed outside the district as per the approved operational plan, once the needs of the group, are fulfilled and the decision is made by the general assembly. Priority should be given to meet the needs of the district. Cremation, household needs and development works should be taken into consideration while setting the priorities for sale and distribution of forest products.

The group can take the timber harvested from the community forests (according to the operational plan) to the nearest saw-mill using the group's own hammer mark. Before that the group has to inform the respective forest office. The committee has to monitor this activity.

## 5.5 Development of forest based enterprises

Community forest does not only provide fuel wood, fodder, leaf litter and timber to the users but it can also improve the livelihood by generating employment and economic opportunities through forest based enterprises.

The following activities can be done to start forest based enterprises:

- Establish the operation and management process of the enterprise
- Make a list of potential enterprises that can utilise raw materials available in the forest
- Select the kind of enterprise that will create benefits by conducting a feasibility study
- Examine the number/category of people who will benefit from the enterprise
- Explore markets and ensure that the products from the enterprise will be consumed
- Make a list of stakeholders that can assist in establishing the enterprises and collect

information about ‘who can contribute physical support, financial support or skills to the enterprise and take initiation for assistance.

- Make a business plan for the forest based enterprise
- Develop eco-tourism depending on the possibilities
- Create a network among groups with similar goals and identify areas of cooperation
- Emphasise the concept of one community forest one enterprise

Establishment of forest based enterprise will require skills, knowledge and resources. For this assistance of the supporting agencies can be taken.

### **5.6 Coordination with other agencies**

Community Forest User Groups can get services by coordinating with other supporting agencies working in the same field. Stakeholders like VDCs, District Forest Office and other supporting agencies related to community forestry can coordinate to implement development programmes.

The following steps can be taken for coordination:

- Identify agencies that implement programmes at local level
- Discuss about programmes with agencies that can collaborate with user group
- Include identified activities in the annual programmes of the user group and implement them

### **5.7 Human and institutional development of the group**

The group can prepare and revise its constitution and operational plan by themselves developing their own human and institutional capacity and submit them for approval.

The following action should be taken for institutional and human resource development:

- User group should develop a system to get services from a local resource person. The resource person from a group can be used by neighbouring groups.
- The user group should submit the name, address and the kind of support a local resource person can provide to the District Forest Office
- The annual plan should include necessary trainings like financial management, silvicultural operation, group management. Priority should be given to the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups in such programmes.
- An equitable process should be adopted for institutional and human resource development.
- The user group should develop necessary skills and capacities while implementing pro-poor programmes.

- User group should practice self-evaluation within the group.
- There should be exchange of ideas and experiences among user groups through study tours, trainings and workshops
- Organise necessary trainings and workshops for sustainable management of forest and processing and marketing of forest products.

### **5.8 Formation of group network**

Interest groups should form a network and work together. If a network of groups that produce similar forest products is formed for marketing, that gives maximum benefits. Groups should also develop a system to share skills, techniques etc to maximise the benefits of coordinating local cooperatives and non-governmental organizations.

### **5.9 Self-monitoring and evaluation of the group**

The group should do self-monitoring of its achievements, implementation process and lessons learned from the implementation of the programmes as mentioned in the operational plan. The poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups should be represented during evaluation. The group should support the District Forest Office and other related agencies while monitoring by providing necessary information and statistics.

The following points should be considered while doing self-monitoring and evaluation:

- Forest protection, silvicultural operation and management activities
- The benefits to the poor from the income of the forest and forest resources
- Effectiveness of the programmes targeted towards strengthening the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups.
- Evaluation of community development programmes
- Fund mobilization status
- Implementation of issues and recommendations raised during public hearings and public auditing
- Implementation of the operational plan prepared on the basis of principles of good governance
- Whether or not an annual report including progress on operational plan implementation, forest product collection and distribution and financial details has been sent to the District Forest Office and Area (*Ilaka*) Forest Office/ Range Post on time
- Whether or not the demands of the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups have been addressed
- Whether or not a democratic process has been applied while making decisions and institutional development

# Chapter VI

This chapter includes the process of revising the user group constitution and operational plan. The constitution and operational plan should be revised incorporating the strength and areas that need improvements, experiences and learning gained while implementing, monitoring and evaluating the constitution and operational plan. The constitution and operational plan preparation process can be followed while making revisions. The needs of users and changes in forest conditions should be considered during revision. The user group can take assistance from the staff of District Forest Office or other supporting agencies (such as NGOs, group network, Local Resource Person, social mobiliser, animator). The constitution and operational plan revised with the support of Local Resource Person or other service providers has to be recognised by the District Forest Office after investigating whether the necessary process has been followed.

## **6.1 Categorisation and prioritisation of the community forest for the revision of operational plan**

While revising operational plans that have passed the plan period, the District Forest Office should classify and prioritise, setting fixed criteria such as forthcoming changes in forest condition, need of forest management activities, availability of resources, financial condition of the user group etc in coordination and collaboration with district level stakeholders. Priority should be given to weaker groups while revising the forest operational plan.

Generally, the operational plan is revised based on the following conditions:

- If any problem arises during implementation
- If there are additional management activities to be done due to changes in the needs of forest user group or the objective of the management
- If there is a need for supplementary institutional development of the group
- If any policy or law is revised
- If the operational plan period ends

## **6.2 Review of constitution and operational plan**

The revision process should be initiated after reviewing the constitution and operational plan. An analysis of the provisions of the constitution as well as experiences and learning should be done to see which provisions hindered or assisted during implementation. There should be an evaluation and review of the user group's dynamism such as capacity building of its members, official representation of women and excluded groups, changes in leadership and social justice. The Community Forest User Group should self-monitor to see if its decision making process is transparent, participatory and responsive.

The user group should discuss and review the obstacles that were encountered while implementing the operational plan, things that facilitated implementation and achievements, whether the activities

mentioned in the operational plan have been implemented and what are the necessary activities and provisions to be included.

The following points should be considered while reviewing the constitution and operational plan:

- Discuss past activities and activeness of the user group
- Understand the interest and concerns of the members of various sub-groups within the user group such as forest management system, distribution of forest products and other benefits, protection activities and livelihood improvement programmes
- Review the status or condition of the forest and forest management objectives of the user groups.
- Review the decisions of the group in the past and their implementation status.
- Review financial management of the user group
- Review the constitution and operational plan implementation status and identify if the provisions have been met as mentioned and analyse the reasons for this
- Evaluate to see if information and suggestions provided by the user group as well as supporting agencies were helpful in the planning process and problem solving.
- Discuss the problems faced by the user group and find appropriate solutions
- Share experiences with supporting agencies. Local bodies and political parties can be included in these discussions.

### **6.3 Revision of constitution and operational plan**

The user group should initiate the revision of constitution and operational plan based on the information gathered during the review process. Generally, operational plans will not be revised before the plan period. However, under special circumstances (such as the inventory of herbal plants, need for immediate management of forest due to a sudden change in forest composition), the revision process should move forward after being approved by a two-thirds majority of the general assembly. The local bodies should be coordinated with the revision process.

The following work should be done while revising the constitution and the operational plan:

- Discuss past, present and possible future changes in the condition of community forest
- Note points to be changed as per the interest of users
- Discuss points to be revised in every *Tole* and interest group meeting
- If it is needed to do forest resource inventory based on the necessities and interest of the group and changes in the forest condition, carryout resource inventory and analyse the data.
- Discuss at each *Tole* and interest group meetings and develop a framework of revised operational plan based on the needs of the forest user group, analysis of forest resources and objectives of forest management.
- Keep record of decisions of the user group for revision of operational plan

In case a general point or topic of the operational plan has to be revised before the plan period, it can be done with the decision of general assembly but the user group should inform District Forest Office about this.

#### **6.4 Endorsement of the revised constitution and operational plan at the general assembly**

The revised constitution and operational plan should be presented at the general assembly for a detailed discussion among the users. The framework of the revised constitution and operational plan should be discussed point wise at the general assembly and approved upon general consensus. This process should have meaningful participation of all the users including the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups as well as other excluded groups and ensure these people have understood the points that are being revised.

#### **6.5 Inform District Forests Office about revised constitution**

The approved constitution along with the decisions of the general assembly should be submitted to the District Forests Office within 15 days. District Forests Officer should send a written statement with suggestions to the user group within 30 days if the constitution approved at the general assembly is against the clauses of Forest Act and Regulations.

#### **6.6 Approval of the revised operational plan from District Forests Office**

The approved operational plan along with the decisions of the general assembly should be submitted to the District Forests Office for approval. If the implementation of the operational plan decided at the general meeting and submitted for approval at the District Forests Office has significant adverse impact on the environment, the District Forest Officer should prevent the user group from putting the revision into practice within 30 days. It is the responsibility of the user group to follow the directions.

#### **6.7 Monitoring and record keeping**

The user group should monitor and keep records of all the activities carried out in the previous fiscal year within first four months of the fiscal year in the format given in annex 15 of this guideline. For this purpose, a separate monitoring sub-committee can be formed involving members of the user group. The sub-committee thus formed should regularly monitor all the activities of the group and analyse the information obtained as per annex 15 and submit a report to the group.



# Chapter VII

## 7 Role of stakeholders in community forestry process

The role of user group and other stakeholders in community forestry process will be as follows:

### 7.1 Community Forest User Group

- Prepare a vision of the user group and work towards institutional development and self dependence
- Prepare and revise the constitution and operational plan
- Implement the constitution and operational plan
- Prepare and implement an annual plan of the group through participatory method
- Develop and mobilise skilled man power and resource person (facilitator) needed for the group in coordination with stakeholders and self investment.
- Take initiatives for awareness, empowerment and meaningful participation of the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic group in decision making process.
- Include the concept of sustainable forest management, good governance and livelihoods in the operational plan
- Carryout regular self-monitoring and evaluation of user group activities.
- Adopt equitable distribution systems for sale and distribution of forest products
- Use the available resources and opportunities in an equitable manner
- Every FUG should give and take necessary information from and to the user committee
- Send decisions made by user group or committee to respective Range Post on a regular basis

### 7.2 Community Forest User Committee

- Take initiatives for awareness, empowerment and meaningful participation of the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic group in the decision making process.
- Implement group decisions and annual programmes by preparing work calendar
- Identify poor users within the group and implement programmes accordingly
- Prepare an annual progress report of the user group and submit to the concerned agency
- Conduct internal, public as well as external audit on a regular basis
- Carryout regular self-monitoring and evaluation of the user group activities.
- Maintain records of the income and expenditure of the group.
- Adopt equitable distribution systems for sale and distribution of forest products
- Use the available resources and opportunities in an equitable manner

- Keep records of activities of the group such as forest products collection, sale and distribution, community development, institutional development etc and inform the user group.
- Inform the group about the user group's constitution, operational plan and periodic update of policies, directions and circulations.
- Coordinate with local bodies, government and non-government organizations as necessary
- Share knowledge, skills and learning with neighboring user groups
- Mobilise the facilitator according to the financial situation of the group
- Take initiatives to include the group's annual plan into annual plans of local body.
- Develop and implement the livelihoods improvement plan

### **7.3 Facilitator**

- Facilitate the user group to be self-dependent as per the capability, needs and interests of the group.
- Facilitate the process of user group formation, and constitution and operational plan preparation, implementation and revision.
- Support in sharing information and extend coordination among Community Forest User Group, Range Post and other supporting agencies.
- Work in coordination with concerned Forest Office, user group and other supporting agencies
- Provide institutional, legal and technical advice to the group
- Encourage the participation of users, especially poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups in the user group.
- Encourage, facilitate and organise targeted programmes for poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous and ethnic groups.
- Support expansion of the network by establishing contact and coordination among user groups.
- Support preparation of the group's annual plan
- Facilitate trainings, workshops, public hearings or public auditing.
- Facilitate well being ranking and preparing livelihoods improvement plan of user households..
- Facilitate in conflict management

### **7.4 Range Post, Area (*Ilaka*) Forest Office and District Forest Office**

- Make necessary inquires to see whether a constitution or operational plan, which is prepared by a group itself or with the help of a resource person/ facilitator or service

provider is in accordance to community forestry process and the guidelines and approve accordingly

- Support capacity building of the user group.
- Support implementation of programmes related to good governance, livelihoods and sustainable management of forest
- Provide suggestions to concerned agencies for the promotion of community forestry programme as necessary.
- Support research based programmes
- Provide technical as well as other necessary advice to the group
- Coordinate with agencies related to community forestry.
- Monitor each and every community forest and user group at least once in a year and give and take advice and recommendation to and from them.
- Discuss with district level agencies and assist in preparing and revising the constitution and operational plan and implementing forest management process in a simple and practical manner.
- Organise interaction with stakeholders of the community forest from time to time.
- Include the annual plan of the user group in the annual plan of District Forest Office

### **7.5 Group Network**

- Advocate in favor of the community while making policies.
- Take initiatives to handover community forest.
- Raise community awareness in biodiversity conservation.
- Support the user group for good governance, livelihood and sustainable forest management.
- Contribute towards development of human resources in order to make community forestry development programme self reliant.
- Promote programmes that help to reduce poverty
- Take initiatives to secure traditional rights of indigenous and ethnic groups.
- Give advice both at local as well as policy level about community forestry issues.
- Act as a coordinator between the user group and outside agencies.
- Support the self-monitoring programme of the user group
- Support the removal of legal barriers
- Take initiatives to support the user group in collecting resources for the development of forest

## **7.6 Non-government Organization**

- Give advice while making policies
- Support development of institutional and technical knowledge of the user group.
- Publicise good practices of the community forestry.
- Conduct participatory study and research and provide information to concerned agencies.
- Support implementation of activities for good governance, livelihoods and sustainable management of forest
- Support the self-monitoring programmes of user groups.
- Support capacity building of user groups, government and other concerned agencies.
- Support implementation of the plan prepared by the user group
- Play the role of a mediator and facilitate the necessary technical and social part for the management of forest.
- Provide human as well as financial support for institutional development of the user group

## **7.7 Local Body (VDC/ DDC)**

- Promote the concept of community forestry
- Support implementation of activities for good governance, livelihoods and sustainable forest management
- Advocate to remove barriers
- Provide financial support to user groups.
- Support conflict resolution
- Support resource management and mobilisation
- Support monitoring and evaluation
- Coordinate among the stakeholders of community forestry.
- Include the annual plan of the user group in the annual plan of local bodies.

## **7.8 Forestry Projects**

- Support the capacity development of District Forest Office, non-government organizations and local bodies
- Support programmes for good governance, sustainable management of forest, livelihoods and community development.
- Support formation and capacity building of user groups

- Encourage the development of the group network
- Support the government in analyzing and reviewing policies, rules and regulations.
- Develop ways and strategies to promote carbon trade
- Support action research for active forest management
- Implement pilot projects and keep records and share the experiences.
- Support conservation of biodiversity and promotion of eco-tourism
- Support promotion of pro-poor micro enterprise.
- Support forest certification.

### **7.9 Government Agencies (Central and Regional)**

- Formulate and revise policies, strategies, rules and regulations in consultation with stakeholders and develop mechanisms for their implementation.
- Coordinate with related agencies at the national level (such as: National Planning Commission, line ministries, donor agencies, stakeholders etc.)
- Carry out monitoring and evaluation of community forests and user groups
- Coordinate community forestry programmes with other sectoral programmes.
- Develop techniques for participatory action research.
- Take initiatives to make criteria and indicators for sustainable management of community forest, livelihoods improvement and good governance.

# Annexes



## **Annex 2: Points to be mentioned in the constitution**

- Name and address of the user group
- Objective of the user group
- Stamp of the user group
- Names and addresses of the user group members (one woman and one man from each household)
- Number of households and estimated population of the user group
- Provisions for the user group membership
- Socio-economic status of the user group
- Roles, responsibilities and rights of the user group
- Formation process of the user committee
- Roles, responsibilities and rights of user committee
- Working procedure of the user committee
- Resignation approval and appointment of committee members
- Provisions for fund mobilisation
- Auditing system (public auditing, internal auditing)
- Provisions for operational plan preparation
- Offences and punishments
- Provisions to control offences
- Provisions for punishment to those users who violate the operational plan.
- Role of service providers and District Forest Office
- Institution of indigenous and ethnic groups within the group and their role in the group.
- User households, information obtained from well being ranking and pro-poor programmes (fund mobilisation, income generation activities, skill development programme)
- Programmes targeted for interest groups (fund mobilisation, income generation activities, skill development programme)
- Programme/ plan based on well being ranking
- Programme/plan for *Tole* group
- Formation of sub-groups and their roles, responsibilities and rights
- Working procedure of the group
- Provisions for the general assembly
- Decision making process of the general assembly
- Provisions for handover and takeover
- Provisions for the revision of constitution
- Miscellaneous
- Subject matters to be included in the annex of the constitution
- Name list of user committee members
- Name list of household heads (both women and men)



### **Annex 3: Some programmes targeted to the poor women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups**

- While mobilising the fund, at least 35 percent worth cash or kinds or both should be allocated to implement programmes targeted to the poor and excluded groups identified from the wealth being ranking.
- Provide part of the community forest to the poor for income generation activities
- Generate skill oriented trainings and self-employment opportunities
- Implement pro-poor income generation and enterprise development programmes
- Implement women empowerment programmes
- Provisions for equitable distribution of the forest products (free of charge or subsidised rate or taking membership fee)
- Provisions for emergency funds
- Implement small infrastructure programme targeted at excluded groups.
- While offering entry as a new member of the user group, look at the financial condition of the user and offer reduced rates or no fee for the poor.
- Give priority to the users from poor and excluded groups for any employment (nursery foreman, forest watcher, office assistant and forest management activities, etc) generated within the user group.
- Provide scholarships to the children of poor users.
- There should be compulsory participation of the poor group in the trainings and workshops. These trainings and workshops should be result oriented.
- Arrange appropriate financial incentives to the poor users who participate in assemblies and meetings
- Provide opportunities for leadership

## Annex 4: Application format for user group registration

The District Forest Officer

District Forest Office, .....

.....

In compliance with the provision of the Forest Act, 1993 and the Forest Regulation, 1995, we hereby apply for the registration of user group along with the constitution. Please register the Users Group and inform us about this.

Applicant .....

On behalf of the users group

S.N	Name	Position	Signature
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Date:

## **Annex 5: Format for agreement to be done at the time of registration of forest user group**

With authorization received from.....Community Forest Users Group,..... District,.....Village Development Committee, Ward Number....., we have agreed to undertake the protection, development, management and utilization of the national forest under ..... VDC Ward Number ..... as community forest remaining within the purview of Forest Act 1993 and Forest Regulation 1995 and according to the approved constitution attached herewith and abide by the following conditions. If not followed the terms and conditions of this agreement, we are ready to bear responsibility according to Forest Act 1993 and Forest Regulation 1995. This contract is signed willingly and submitted to the Government of Nepal through the District Forest Office.

### **Terms and Conditions**

1. No activities other than those specified in the approved constitution will be implemented.
2. No encroachment and destruction by any means will be done in the forest area to be handed over as community forest and other forest areas
3. We will follow technical advice and suggestions given by the District Forest Office, Area (Ilaka) Forest Office and Range Post.
4. We will submit an annual report including all the activities carried out by the user group based on the information obtained from the monitoring format within one month after completion of the fiscal year to the District Forest Office.
5. We agree to accept any action taken as per Forest Act and Rule for not following the operational plan or not being capable of implementing the operational plan or carrying out any activity that has significant negative impact on the environment or not following the provisions of the Forest Act and Forest Rule related to community forestry and terms and conditions given by the government.
6. Besides forestry development work, no other public development work such as road, school, drinking water, irrigation, etc. will be implemented inside the community forest without prior approval of the government. Such work should not have any significant negative impact on the environment.
7. No wildlife will be caught, chased or killed against the National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act 1972. We will catch or assist in catching culprits, and sent them to the concerned agency for necessary action..
8. We will support forestry staff coming for the field observation of community forestry activities.
9. We accept that this agreement has no effect on the rights established by an agreement between the Government of Nepal and other agencies prior to handover of the community forest

Mr. .... representative of Community Forest User Group

Name: .....

Position: .....

Signature: .....

Stamp of the user group

## Annex 6: Format for user group registration certificate

Government of Nepal  
Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation  
Department of Forests  
District Forest Office, .....  
.....

Registration No.

Date:

To,

.....Users Group

As per the decision taken by this office on..... (date) this certificate has been issued after registering the Users Group according to the Forest Act, 1993 and the Forest Regulation, 1995.

Details of the Users Group

Area of the User Group:

Number of households:

Total population:

Certificate issuing officers

Name:

Designation:

Signature:

Date:

**Note:** In case this certificate is lost, torn or destroyed, another certificate shall be issued on payment of Rs.25 (twenty-five rupees).

## Annex 7: List of activities that can be implemented in the community forest

S.N.	Name of the activity	Unit	Quantity	Annual budget Rs.
	<b><i>Forest Protection</i></b>			
1.1	Grazing control	ha.		
1.2	Fire protection			
a	Fire line construction	km		
b	Workshop on fire control	Times		
c	Extension activities related to forest fire control	Type		
d	Street drama	“		
1.3	Evacuating forest encroachment	Ha.		
1.4	Protection by forest watcher	No.		
1.5	Protection by group member (turn by turn basis)			
1.6	Fencing	km		
1.7	Forest demarcation	“		
1.8	Other			
<b>2.</b>	<b><i>Forest development</i></b>			
2.1	Nursery maintenance	No.		
2.2	Nursery construction	“		
2.3	Seedling production	“		
2.4	Plantation	Ha.		
2.5	Weeding	“		
2.6	Casualty replacement	“		
2.7	Enrichment plantation	“		
2.8	Road sides plantation	Seedling		
2.9	Distribution of seedling for private plantation	No.		
<b>3.</b>	<b><i>Silvicultural operation</i></b>			
3.1	Regeneration protection through fencing	Ha.		
3.2	Block division	km		
3.3	Forest road construction	“		
3.4	Cleaning	Ha.		
3.5	Thinning	“		

3.6	Pruning	“		
3.7	Singling	“		
<b>4</b>	<b><i>Forest utilization</i></b>			
4.1	Forest inventory	Ha.		
4.2	Preparation of forest utilization action plan	No.		
4.3	Timber-firewood collection			
a	Timber	Cu. ft.		
b	Firewood	Head load		
4.4	Herbs collection	kg		
4.5	Non timber forest product collection	“		
4.6	Leaf litter collection	Load		
4.7	Grass collection	“		
4.8	Fodder collection	“		
<b>5</b>	<b><i>Income generating activities</i></b>			
5.1	Improved grass cultivation	Ha.		
5.2	Broom grass cultivation	“		
5.3	Bamboo cultivation	“		
5.4	Cane cultivation	“		
5.5	Cardamom cultivation	“		
5.6	Multipurpose fruit cultivation	“		
5.7	Herbal nursery Construction and seedling production	No.		
5.8	Herbal nursery construction and demonstration	“		
5.9	Herbs production and processing	As per need		
<b>6</b>	<b><i>Soil conservation programmes</i></b>			
6.1	Gully control	Location		
6.2	Landslide control	“		
6.3	River bank cutting control	“		
6.4	Conservation pond construction	No.		
<b>7</b>	<b><i>Institutional development programmes</i></b>			
7.1	Forest operational plan review	No.		
7.2	Group constitution revision	“		
7.3	Monitoring and evaluation of Community Forest	Times		

7.4	General assembly of the group	“		
7.5	Executive committee meeting	“		
7.6	Evaluation of group members and reward for outstanding job	No.		
7.7	Publication and distribution of extension materials	As per need		
7.8	Publication of annual report	No.		
7.9	Environment day celebration	Times		
7.10	Forest day celebration	“		
7.11	Biodiversity day celebration	“		
7.12	International mountain day celebration	“		
7.13	Office building of the user group	Location		
a	Repair and maintenance	No.		
b	Construction	“		
c	Furniture	As per need		
d	Office materials	“		
<b>8</b>	<b><i>Training/workshop programmes</i></b>			
8.1	Community forest orientation training	Times		
8.2	Progress review and work plan preparation workshop	“		
8.3	Account and Record Keeping training	“		
8.4	Planning workshop	“		
8.5	Community forest management training	“		
8.6	Community forestry awareness workshop	“		
8.7	Public awareness workshop on community forest for <i>Dalit</i> , Indigenous people, Ethnic groups and excluded groups	“		
8.8	Women awareness workshop	“		
8.9	Community forestry coordination workshop with nongovernmental organizations	“		
8.10	Teacher workshop	“		
8.11	Community forestry interaction workshop with students	“		
8.12	Essay competition on community forest for school students	“		
8.13	Nursery management training	“		

8.14	Non timber forest product management training	“		
8.15	Study tours for members of the user group (within and outside the district)	“		
8.16	Training on improved cooking stoves	“		
8.17	Bee keeping training	“		
8.18	Briquette making training	“		
8.19	Training on making juice from fruits and flower	“		
8.20	Handicraft making training from bamboo and <i>Nigalo</i>	“		
8.21	Forest products collection and record management training	“		
8.22	Quiz contests on forest and environment for school students	“		
<b>9</b>	<b><i>Community development programmes</i></b>			
9.1	Improved cook stove distribution	No.		
9.2	Women literacy programmes	Times		
9.3	Biogas plant establishment subsidy	“		
9.4	Beehive subsidy	“		
9.5	Prize to the owner of improved variety of livestock as subsidy	“		
9.6	Goat exchange programmes	“		
9.7	Demonstration of off season vegetable farming	Location		
9.8	Trail improvement	km		
9.9	Construction of bridge/ culvert	No.		
9.10	Maintenance of school building	“		
9.11	School grant	“		
9.12	Scholarship for students	“		
9.13	Repair and maintenance of small drinking water facility	Location		
9.14	Repair and maintenance of small irrigation facility	“		
9.15	Fruit seedling distribution	No.		
9.16	Improvement of public places			
a	Temple	No.		



b/c	Public guest house	“		
D	Resting place	“		
E	Pond	“		
F	Other	“		
9.17	Stitching and knitting training for women from poor, indigenous and ethnic groups	Times		

## **Annex 8: Important point to be included in the operational plan**

### **(1) Forest management**

- Historical background of the forest
- Details of the forest (name, boundary, area, geographic situation, type, condition, sloppy areas, open areas, rivers, lakes etc)
- District map showing range post, VDCs and community forests
- Determine the management objectives of each forest block based on the vision of forest management
- Demand and supply of forest products and other alternatives means
- Forest products required to fulfill basic needs
- Forest products available for trade and enterprise
- Review of old operational plan if the plan has been revised
- Basis for division of forest block, sub-block as well as working area
- Details of forest block and sub-block (name, boundary, area, aspect, slope, soil, forest type, species, regeneration condition, crown density, useful species, non timber forest products and other related information)
- Maps showing details of forest, block, sub-block, forest management as well as production of forest products based on results of forest inventory and analysis of forest resources.
- Forest protection measures
- Forest management options (Block, sub-block, working area wise) such as weeding, pruning, thinning, singling (a timetable should clearly mention the place, responsible person, date and the ways to carry out these activities)
- Nursery, plantation and other income generation activities (a timetable should clearly mention the place, responsible person, date and the ways to carry out these activities)
- Mention the time, quantity, method and location to collect forest products according to block, sub-block and working area
- Management of non timber forest products (species selection, area allocation, resource survey and management model)
- Wildlife and biodiversity available in the forest and provision for their conservation
- Provision for fine and punishment
- Forest development activities (such as seedling production and plantation)
- Annual planning process
- Capacity building programmes (trainings) / institutional development (place, person and date to carry out these activities)
- Visions for community development and community development programmes (drinking water, health, irrigation canal, roads and other programmes)

- Special forest management and livelihood improvement programmes for women and the poor
- Provision and procedure for monitoring and evaluation

## **(2) Pro-poor livelihood programmes**

In order to develop community forest as an important source of livelihood for the poor, the operational plan should include special programmes to improve the living standard of these groups. Pro-poor livelihood programmes of the group should be planned and implemented in the following three phases and this should be mentioned in a separate chapter of the operational plan.

- (a) Identification of the poor households:** Poor households should be identified through participatory wealth-being ranking considering the local context. Ranking should be based on social, physical, natural, human and economical factors.
- (b) Preparation of livelihood plan:** Livelihood plan should be prepared involving poor households identified and members of the user committee and other supporting agencies. The following points should be discussed while preparing the plan.
- Interest, capability and commitment of poor household
  - Availability of local resources
  - Programmes that yield short term results and are less risky
  - Physical and financial support that user group can provide
  - Role of other supporting agencies
  - Market conditions
- (c) Possible activities to be included in livelihood plan:** The responsibility to implement the plan, (prepared as mentioned above) lies with the respective household. However, it is the duty of the group to provide support.

Here are some potential activities for livelihood plan:

- Activities that increase direct income and employment (forestry activities such as herbs cultivation, bamboo and rattans, etc., and livestock rearing, honey production, mushroom cultivation, vegetable farming, grocery shops, etc.)
- Micro enterprise establishment as well as involvement (such as juice production, bamboo and cane items, herbs, leather shoes, hand made paper, briquette etc.)
- Support in literacy (such as scholarship and adult literacy)
- Allocate community forest land for income generation activity
- Special provision to provide forest products at subsidised rate or free of charge
- Leadership development by providing opportunity to hold leadership positions in the committee

- Involve poor, women, *Dalit*, Indigenous people and ethnic groups, in training and workshop by giving them priority
- Provide food or snacks and appropriate incentive to encourage those who participate in the meeting
- Provide special support during difficult times

The group should make all the necessary arrangements and regularly monitor these livelihood activities. There should be a written agreement between the group and respective households for all the support and activities to be provided to the poor households. This will protect the rights of the poor to get support even if there are any changes in the group. Although the agreement is made with both the women and the man of the poor households, the major responsibility should be given to the women to make it more effective.

### **(3) Forest based enterprise development**

After the local needs are met, the surplus forest products from the community forest can be used for commercial purpose purposes to generate income and employment opportunities for user group members. It is necessary to develop forest based enterprise to increase income. Depending on the condition of the resources, the following subject matters should be considered to establish enterprise or trade forest products.

- (1) Demand and supply situation of produced items, location for sale, necessary investment and status of profit and loss
- (2) Availability of necessary skill and manpower to process forest products (such as Nepali hand made paper, sawn timber, etc.) for sale and distribution
- (3) Status of necessary infrastructure for establishing and running enterprise
- (4) Possibility of providing employment to the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous and ethnic groups through skill development
- (5) Possibilities of support for investment on share from the group and other agencies in the name of the poor, women, *Dalit*, indigenous people and ethnic groups.
- (6) Possibilities of collaboration between the user group and private sector to provide raw materials and investment to run the enterprise.

Based on the above study and analysis, forest products should be classified into following categories.

- (1) Direct sale of raw materials collected from the forest (herbs, timber, firewood, grass, etc.)
- (2) Semi processed and sold for additional processing (such as handmade paper, sawn timber etc.)
- (3) Sold and distributed after full processing (aromatic oil, squash, rope, thread, etc.)

This classification helps to determine the ways different species can be traded and the required investment.

Following things should be done while establishing an enterprise:

- (1) Enterprise registration and establishment
- (2) Preparation of business plan
- (3) Environment study (if necessary)
- (4) Benefit sharing

The group should collect forest products from the community forest for sale and distribution. Forest products can be sold outside the group only after the needs of the users have been fulfilled. Distant users from the same district will be given priority when selling the products.

**(4) Fund utilization and management:**

At least 25 (twenty-five) percent of the total income from the sale of forest products should be spent on development, protection and management of community forest. Likewise at least 35 percent worth cash or kind or both should be spent on livelihood improvement of the poor. For the management of fund, a record keeping system and expenditure procedure should be clearly mentioned in the operational plan.

**Annex 9: Application format for community forest registration**

To,  
District Forest Officer  
District Forest Office, .....  
.....

In compliance with the provision of the Forest Act, 1993 and Forest Regulation, 1995, we hereby apply requesting to handover the following forest as community forest for the protection, improvement and utilization according to the operational plan attached herewith.

(A) Name and address of the forest proposed to be managed as community forest:

Boundary:

Area:

(B) Are there wildlife? If yes, what are the species?

Applicant,

.....on behalf of the Community Forest User Group

Signature

S.N.	Name	Position
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Date:

## **Annex 10: Format for agreement at the time of registration of community forest**

With authorization received from.....Community Forest User Group located at ..... District,.....VillageDevelopmentCommittee,WardNumber.....,we..... have agreed to undertake the national forest within the boundary of East ....., West ....., North ..... South .....having ..... ha. area .as community forest and implement, according to the attached operational plan and abide by the following conditions, the development, protection , management and utilization of the forest. If not followed the terms and conditions as agreed, we are ready to bear responsibility according to Forest Act 1993 and Forest Regulation 1995. This agreement is signed willingly and submitted to the Government of Nepal through the District Forest Office.

### **Terms and Conditions**

1. No activities other than those specified in the approved operational plan will be implemented.
2. No encroachment and destruction by any means will be done in the handed over community forest and other forest area.
3. We will follow the technical advice, suggestions given by the District Forest Office, Area (*Ilaka*) Forest Office and Range Post.
4. We will submit an annual report including all the activities carried out by the user group based on the information obtained from the monitoring format within one month after completion of the fiscal year to the District Forest Office.
5. We will accept any action taken against the User Group for not following the operational plan or carrying out activities against the operational plan or carrying out any activities that have significant adverse impact on the environment and not following Forest Act or Forest Regulation and terms and conditions given by the government.
6. Besides forest development work, no other community development works such as road, school, drinking water, irrigation channel, etc. will be implemented inside the community forest without the prior approval of the government of Nepal. But this should not have significant adverse impact on the environment.
7. No wildlife will be caught or killed against the National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act 1972. We will assist in catching culprits.
8. We will help forestry staff coming for the field observation of community forestry activities.
9. We accept that this agreement will not hamper any rights mentioned in the agreement between the Government of Nepal and other organizations, if there is any prior to handover the community forest until the agreement period.
10. We agree to pay Rs.25 (twenty-five rupees) to get another certificate in case the original community forestry certificate is lost, torn or destroyed.

11. While revising the operational plan, we will not include any activities that have significant adverse impact on the environment.
12. The land ownership of the forest areas that has been given to the community as protection areas lies with the Government of Nepal. However, the user group will be responsible for its protection.
13. We will take technical support necessary for the development, protection and improvement of the community forest from the technicians available at the District Forests Office, Area (*Ilaka*) Forest Office or Range Post, other supporting organizations and the group.
14. Only the forest products available according to the approved operational plan will be sold and distributed equitably within the group.
15. Besides cereal crops, we will only cultivate cash crops like bamboo, broom grass, fruits and herbal plants that will not hamper the density and production of the major forest products of the community forest.
16. Under any condition, we will not harvest more trees or wood exceeding the annual allowable cut stated in the operational plan.
17. We will invite forestry technician in the general assembly if there is a need to revise forestry activities mentioned in the operational plan.
18. The group can coordinate with other organizations to get support if it realises the need for forest development and community development activities.
19. While sending participants for any trainings, workshops, seminars and tours we will include those who are interested and knowledgeable in that field.
20. Generally the operational plan will not be revised until at least 2 (two) years after it is implemented. If any special circumstance requires its revision before that, it has to be passed by two-third majority at the general assembly.
21. We will accept any action taken against the user group officials for not following Forest Act 1993, Forest Regulation 1995, operational plan and the constitution of the group.
22. As mentioned in the Forest Act, we agree to expend at least 25 (twenty five) percent of the income obtained according to the operational plan, on forest protection, development and management.

Signed (or marked) on behalf of .....Community Forest,  
 .....District, .....VDC, Ward No .....,

Finger Print      The chairman of the Community Forest  
 R                    L                    Mr/s.....



**Witness**

Witnessed by ....., residing in .....District, .....VDC, Ward No..

R                    L                    Mr/s.....

Witnessed by ....., residing in .....District, .....VDC, Ward No..

R                    L                    Mr/s.....

Witnessed by ....., residing in .....District, .....VDC, Ward No ....

R                    L                    Mr/s.....

Witnessed by ....., residing in .....District, .....VDC, Ward No..

R                    L                    Mr/s.....

Date:

## Annex 11: Format for community forest registration certificate

Government of Nepal  
Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation  
Department of Forests  
District Forest Office, .....  
.....

To,

.....Users Group  
.....  
.....

In compliance with the provision of the Forest Act 1993 and Forest Regulation 1995, the following national forest area is handed over as community forest for its management and utilization according to the operational plan attached herewith.

Description of the community forest

Name:

Boundary:

Area:

Certificate issued by District Forest Officer

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**Note:** In case this certificate is lost, torn or destroyed, another certificate shall be issued on payment of Rs.25 (twenty-five rupees).

## Annex 12: Format for cover page of operational plan

Front Cover

# Community Forestry Operational Plan

Serial No.: .....  
District/RP/VDC/No

Name of Community Forest:
Name of Users Group:
Address:

Fiscal Year ..... to Fiscal Year .....

.....  
Back Cover

### Guidelines

1. This cover page is compulsory for all operational plans.
2. The name and address of the user group and the community forest should be clearly written inside the box.
3. Duration of the operational plan should be mentioned in the space provided for this.
4. In the serial number write first three letter of the district, two letters of Ilaka and Range Post, VDC code and mention the serial number of approved operational plan of that particular area as shown in the example below. The number of a particular operational plan should remain the same all the time.
5. Example: Serial numbers: Kat/      Th /Th /      Th / ...../ .....  
District/ Ilaka / Ilaka / Range Post / VDC/ No.

**Annex 13: Format for agreement between the Community Forest User Group and the poor group**

Household head

Mr:

Mrs:

Address:

Programme:

Name and Address of the Community Forest User Group:

**Part 1: Background for livelihood and conditions of the poor**

**1. Background**

- Institutionalise the support provided by community forest user group and/or external sources for livelihood improvement of the poor within the group.

*Note: Why, when and for whom were the livelihood programmes initiated*

.....  
.....  
.....

**2. Objective**

- Ensure rights of the poor
- Build confidence of the poor
- Increase income of the poor

**3. Expected result within .....**

- 3.1 Income generation activities ..... will bring social status, satisfaction and income growth for the poor.
- 3.2 The group will make agreement to provide financial as well as non-financial support to alleviate poverty of those who are identified as poor through well-being ranking.
- 3.3 There will be an increase in activities for the poor like building their confidence through personal contact, involving them in trainings and workshops, giving them position at the executive committee, providing scholarships for their children, make available forest products at subsidised price or free of cost, allowing them to use forest area for income generation, giving them priority for employment, involving them in enterprise development, developing connection with other organizations.
- 3.4 Based on the learning, this group will begin to provide support to other households having different well being status and the neighbouring group will provide support to the poor households.

#### 4. Conditions of the poor:

The facilitator can use the following checklist to know the status of physical, natural, financial, human and social capital without any biases.

<b>Financial capital</b>	Wage, source of income, access to fund, bank balance, loan/debt, employment, etc.
<b>Social capital</b>	Membership of an association, relation, friends, access to power, participation in assembly, meeting access to leadership and information, access to development related works and government service
<b>Human capital</b>	Education, health, skills, trainings, children, number of adult family members, intellectual level, occupation, inclination and confidence towards trade, interest and aspiration etc.
<b>Public physical capital</b>	Roads, drinking water, electricity, telephone, health facility, school, club, access to group
<b>Private physical capital</b>	Access to house, vehicles, telephone, radio, cattle, sheep/goat, forest products etc.
<b>Natural capital</b>	Land, forest, stone mine, slate, well, water source
<b>Status of development programme, policy, rules, regulations, legal provision and subsidy</b>	Subsidised subject matters, Rules and regulations that either benefit or hinder, facility and concessions
<b>Vulnerability</b>	Health condition, any chronic disease, location of home (prone to disasters like landslide, flood), settlement on public land, intimidation from somewhere, fear, disaster, social outlook, isolation, discontent, social derision, blame, etc.

*Note: The criteria for determining the poor should be identified by the respective villagers. The criteria should not be dictated by higher authority or the facilitator.*

#### 5. Some criteria used in identifying the poor through well-being ranking

- Dependent on day to day wage labour
- No other wage earners in the family
- Illiterate
- Small wrecked house
- Landless
- Deteriorating health condition and unable to do treatment

## Part 2: Livelihood activities and terms and conditions of agreement

### 6. Name and function of livelihood activities: .....

*Note:* Mention the name of the main activities to be supported by the Community Forest User Group for the livelihood improvement of the poor.

The list of possible activities to be supported by the group for the livelihood improvement of the poor is as follows:

#### Possible activities

1. Activities to be done by the poor for the protection and development of the forest and harvesting forest products  
.....
2. Activities to be done to involve the poor in forest enterprises  
.....
3. Activities to increase income of the poor by mobilizing the group fund and providing soft loan.  
.....
4. Leadership development activities for of the poor  
.....
5. Capacity building activities for the poor  
.....
6. Support and activities to increase employment of the poor  
.....
7. Activities to be done while providing land for income generation to the poor.  
.....

7. **Duration:** Determine the duration of the main activities based on its nature.  
.....

8. **Implementation:** Mention when, where and how livelihood improvement activities will be implemented including roles of stakeholders such as poor, executive committee, user group and external supporting agencies. Clearly state the rights, responsibilities, roles and investment of all the parties.  
.....

9. **Budget and budget release process:** First an agreement will be signed between the project or the government and the user group or service provider. Then the group will sign an agreement with the poor households and provides cash or material support.  
.....

**10. Procedure for revolving fund:** If the cash or material support provided to the poor is paid back or returned to the group and used again to support other poor households then the process for this should be written.

.....

**11. Monitoring:** Mention what process will be adopted and by whom and when.

.....

**12. Report:** Develop a reporting system to provide necessary information both verbally and in written form by the poor as well as the group. Mention that a report should be presented at the monthly committee meeting and general assembly.

**13. Condition for beginning and ending the agreement:** Write the terms and conditions of the agreement as well as the duration of all the activities mentioned in the agreement starting with the day the contract is signed by both the parties.

.....

**14. Condition for change or cancellation of the agreement:** The agreement can be changed or cancelled based on consensus of both parties i.e. concerned poor households and the group. The agreement is generally cancelled if the livelihood activities are not implemented effectively as expected or the poor does not consider it necessary to move forward with these activities. Mention the condition where the group cannot make a unilateral decision to cancel the agreement while the poor disagrees.

.....

Signature:

Signature:

Name of the poor getting support:

Chairperson, Community Forest User Group:

Date:

Date:

## **Annex 14: Format for agreement to provide community forest land to the poor users for income generating activities**

We Community Forest User Group (mentioned first party hereafter) located at .....Zone .....District ..... VDC/Municipality, ..... Ward Number .....and .....sub-group (mentioned second party hereafter) formed involving the poor as mentioned in the operational plan, have prepared and exchanged the agreement abide by the following terms and conditions to do income generating activities in the community forest within the boundary of East ..... West ..... North ..... South .....having ..... ha area. If not followed the terms and conditions of this agreement, we are ready to bear responsibility according to the user group constitution, operational plan as well as this agreement and prevailing laws.

### **Terms and Conditions**

1. Activities will be implemented remaining within the limit of the programme approved by the general assembly of the Community Forest User Group.
2. No cereal crops like paddy, maize and crops that needs soil working while cultivating and harvesting like ginger, turmeric are allowed to cultivate in the community forest.
3. The first party can take back the forest area if the second party could not implement the activities continuously for two years as mentioned in the operational plan or implemented activities against the operational plan. However, they will be provided an opportunity to clarify their concern while taking back the forest land.
4. The agreement period will be for ..... years. However the agreement period can be extended if the work performance is satisfactory.
5. The second party should present all the activities implemented in the group and their achievements at the general assembly.
6. The first party can do regular monitoring and evaluation of all the activities of the second party.
7. The second party should deposit saving from the sale of forest products in the treasury of the first party as per the decision of the group. Likewise the first party should provide at least 35 percent of the total annual income in cash or kind or both to the second party for income generating activities. Both parties can do joint monitoring and review of these activities.



8. A mediating committee should be formed if there is any misunderstanding or conflict in any subject matters. This mediating committee should include representatives from Federation of Community Forest Users, District Forest Office, Local Bodies and supporting agencies. The general assembly should resolve this conflict on the recommendation of the mediating committee. The mediating committee should follow the concept of community forestry and social justice while making recommendations. The first party should facilitate the process to make appropriate decision at the general assembly.
9. As the forest land is allocated only for a fixed period, the second party should work to achieve optimum benefit from this land for their livelihood improvement within the agreement period.
10. Like the rights of the first party, the rights of the users of the second party should remain secure in the group.
11. There should be the provisions for compensation evaluating the investment and achievements of the second party while taking back the land given to them under unavoidable circumstances.
12. There should be the representation of at least one person chosen by the second party in the Community Forest User Committee

<b>Second party</b>	<b>Witness</b>	<b>First party</b>
Name:	Name:	Name:
Signature .....	Signature .....	Signature .....

## Annex 15: Community Forest User Group Monitoring Format

District.....Range Post .....

### 1) Details of Community Forest User Group:

1.1 Name of the group	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	1.2 Code No.	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/>
1.3 VDC	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	1.4 Ward No.	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/>
1.5 CF Handover Date:	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	1.6 Area (ha)	At the time of handover : Present :
1.7 Forest types	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	1.8 Altitude (meter)	<input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/>
1.9 Accessibility of CFUG based on the available facilities	a) Accessible <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/> b) Medium <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/> c) Remote <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>		

Determine the accessibility of CFUG based on VDC where majority of the users live. Accessibility of VDC will be as determined by District Development Committee.

### 1) Information about the membership of the group and executive committee:

2.1 Fill in the number of households in the table below. Get this information from the group record (constitution, operational plan, minute book etc)

Social category	Well being status (household number)			
	Poor	Medium	Wealthy	Remarks
a) <i>Dalit</i>				
b) Indigenous and ethnic groups				
c) Other excluded groups				
d) others				
<b>Total households</b>				
Women headed households				
Associated with other user groups				

**Note:**

*Dalit includes Damai, Kami, Sarki, Badi, Gandarba, Pode, Khadgi, Dhobi, Kalar, Kakaihlya, Kori, Khatik, Chidimar, Tatma, Patharkatta, Pasi, Bantar, Mester (Halkhor), Sarbanga, Chamar, Musahar, Dusad (Pasman), Dom, Halkhor, Khatwe.*

*Ethnic group means Tamang, Magar, Gurung, Rai, Limbu, Newar, Thakali, Tharu, Danuwar, Rajbansi, Dhimal, Kumal, Bote, Chepang, Sunuwar, Bhujel, Darai, Thami, Tajpuriya, Satar, Sherpa, Dura, Jirel, Pahari, Majhi, Kusunda, Bankariya, Raute, Surel, Hayu, Raji, Kisan, Lepcha, Meche, Kusbadiya, Siyar, Lhomi, Thudam, Jhangad, Bhote, Tokpegola, Dolpo, Fi, Mugal, Larke, Lhopa, Balung, Chairotan, Tabe, Yakkha, Chhantyal, Byasi, Hyolmo, Dhanuk, Baramu, Gangai.*

*Other excluded groups means Yadav, Koiree (Kuswaha) Teli, Sundi, Kurmi, Kanu, Kalwar, Haluwai, Thakur, Bamadhe, Bahaye, Baniya, Nuniya, Kumhar, Kahar, Lodhar, Bing, Banda, Bhediyar, Mali, Kamar, Dhuniya, Kebat, Sonar, Malha, Musalman*

*Others means Bahun, Chhetri, Thakuri, Sanyasi, Rajput, Kayasta, Marwari, etc.*

*Poor and excluded group means poor households of all social categories, women, headed households, and Dalit, indigenous, ethnic and households of other excluded groups.*

**Source:** National Foundation for development of Indigenous Nationalities

2.2 Fill in the table (below) the details of executive committee members obtaining information from the group record (Constitution, Operational plan, Minute book etc:

S. No.	Position	Name	Gender	Social category	Well being Status	Occupation	Total service period in the executive committee till now (Year)
1	Chairperson						
2	Vice Chairperson						
3	Secretary						
4	Joint Secretary						
5	Treasurer						
6	Member						
7	Member						
8	Member						
9	Member						
10	Member						
11	Member						
12	Member						
13	Member						
14	Member						
15	Member						
16	Member						
17	Member						

### 3. Information to be collected from Forest Operational Plan:

#### 3.1 Operational Plan approval date, Last Operational Plan revision date and Operational Plan period:

Operational Plan approval date:  Revised date

Operational Plan Period  ..... Year

#### 3.2 Fill in the table below the information obtained from forest resource inventory and the operational plan (to be filled after forest resource inventory or in the first year of implementation of operational plan).

S. No.	Species	Number of seedling per hectare	Number of sapling per hectare	Number of Pole per hectare	Number of trees per hectare	Total growing stock of wood obtained from pole and trees per ha. (cu.ft.)	Annual allowable cut (wood) per hectare (cu.ft)
1	Sal						
2	Khair						
3	Sissoo						
4	Asna						
5	Karma						
6	Jamun						
7	Chilaune						
8	Katus						
9	Utis						
10	Kharsu						
11	Salla						
12	Other						

**Note:** Fill in the above table average growing stock and allowable cut of the total forest area (per hectare basis) based on the information obtained from block or sub-block.

#### 3.3 Information about wildlife

S. No.	Wildlife species	Increased	No change	Decreased

**3.4 Fill in the table below silvicultural operations carried out in the community forest**

S. No.	Silvicultural operation	Area	Beneficiary households	
			Poor and excluded	Other

**4) Fill in the table below the provisions for the poor and excluded groups in the constitution and operational plan**

S. No.	Provisions in the constitution or operational plan	Yes	No
1	Provisions (free or subsidised rate) of sale and distribution of forest products to the poor and excluded households		
2	Provisions of fund mobilization for the benefit of the poor and excluded households		
	a) Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	c) Income generation/Enterprise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	d) others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Provisions for employment to the poor and excluded households		
	a) Daily wages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) Service contract	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Provisions for remuneration to encourage participation of the poor and excluded households in the meeting, training, and other development works	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Provisions for priority to the poor and excluded households in the training, workshop and study tour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Provisions for representation of the poor and excluded households in the key positions of the executive committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Provisions for land allocation of the community forest land to the poor and excluded groups for income generating activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5) Collect the information from the accounts and records of the group and fill in the table below:

**5.1 Information about income:**

Look at the income register of the group and fill in the table below:

S. No.	Title of the income	Total income (Rs)	Remarks
1	Balance from the previous year		
1.1	Bank balance		
1.2	Cash		
1.3	Loan for income generation		
1.4	Other loan		
<b>Total</b>			
2	Timber sale		
3	Fuel wood sale		
4	Pole sale		
5	Agricultural implements sale		
6	Grass and fodder sale		
7	Non Timber Forest Products sale		
8	Grant (local body)		
9	Grant others.....		Maintain source
10	Loan (by group)		
11	Fine		
12	Interest		
13	Others		
14	Membership, annual renewal fee		
<b>Total</b>			
<b>Grand total</b>			

**5.2 Information about expenditure:**

Look at the expenditure register of the group and fill in the table below:

S. No.	Expenditure title	Expenditure (Rs)	Voluntary labour (person day)		Beneficiary households	
			Women	Men	Poor and excluded	Other
<b>A) Forest Development Activities</b>						
1	Protection					
2	Non Timber Forest Product cultivation					

3	Silvicultural operation					
4	Plantation					
5	Fire line construction					
6	Nursery construction and seedling production					
7	Other					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Percent</b>						
<b>B) Community Development activities</b>						
1	Education					
2	Drinking water					
3	Road construction and maintenance					
4	Electrification					
5	Building construction					
6	Health and Sanitation					
7	Other					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Percent</b>						
<b>C) Enterprise Development</b>						
1	Wood Products					
2	Non Timber Forest Products					
3	Others					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Percent</b>						
<b>D) Income generation</b>						
1	Forest products					
2	Agriculture products					
3	Livestock products					
4	Others					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Percent</b>						
<b>E) Training, workshop and study tour</b>						
1	Forest management					
2	Skill development					
3	Orientation					

4	Others					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Percent</b>						
<b>F) Administrative cost</b>						
1=	Staff					
2=	Room rent					
3=	Communication					
4=	Stationary					
5=	Others					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Percent</b>						
<b>G) Interest, Donation, Grant</b>						
<b>1</b>	Interest					
<b>2</b>	Donation					
<b>3</b>	Grant					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Percent</b>						
<b>H) This year balance</b>						
1	Bank balance					
2	Cash					
3	Loan for income generation					
4	Other loan					
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Grant total</b>						



**6) Information about forest products production, sale and distribution (Include pricelist of forest products)**

Look at the forest products production, sale and distribution register of the group and fill in the table below:

S. No.	Types of forest products	Unit	Total production quantity	Internal sale and distribution (Quantity)												Outside sale and distribution			
				Poor and excluded						Others						Qty	Income		
				Free of cost		Paying fee		Full price		Free of cost		Subsidised price		Paying fee					
				HH	Qty	HH	Qty	HH	Qty	HH	Qty	HH	Qty	HH	Qty	Amount Rs.	Amount Rs.		
1	Timber	Cu.ft.																	
2	Fuel wood	Bhari																	
3	Pole	No.																	
4	Agriculture implements	No.																	
5	Grass	Bhari																	
6	Fodder	Bhari																	
7	Leaf litter	Bhari																	
8	Non-timber																		
8.1																			
8.2																			
8.3																			
8.4																			
8.5																			
8.6																			
8.7																			
8.8																			
8.9																			
8.10																			
8.11																			
9	Others																		

## 7) Information about institutional development of the Community Forest User Group:

7.1 Information about the executive committee and general assembly meeting that has happened within a year:

- a) Total no. of committee meeting to be held  a) Total number of general assembly to be held   
 b) Total no. of committee meeting actually held  b) Total no. of general assembly actually held   
 Number of Sub-committee

### c) Fill in the table below average number of participants of the committee meeting in a year

Social category	Well-being status (Participants number)						Remarks
	Poor		Medium		Wealthy		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	
a) <i>Dalit</i>							
b) Indigenous and ethnic groups							
c) Other excluded groups							
d) others							
<b>Total</b>							
Women headed households							

### d) Fill in the table below average number of participants of the general assembly in a year

#### d.1 Based on the gender

Social category	Number of women	Number of men
a) <i>Dalit</i>		
b) Indigenous and ethnic groups		
c) Other excluded groups		
d) others		
<b>Total</b>		
Women headed households		
Members of the committee		

#### d.2 Based on well-being status

Social category	Well-being status (Participants number)			
	Poor	Medium	Wealthy	Remarks
a) <i>Dalit</i>				
b) Indigenous and ethnic groups				
c) Other excluded groups				
d) others				
<b>Total</b>				
Women headed households				
Members of the committee				

## 7.2 Information about public auditing

a) Fill in the table below the details of public auditing

S. No.	Name of the activities for which public auditing is accomplished	Acceptance	
		Yes	No
1			
2			
3			

b) Fill in the table below the details of the participants of the public auditing

Social category	Well-being status (Participants number)						Remarks
	Poor		Medium		Wealthy		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	
a) Dalit							
b) Indigenous and ethnic groups							
c) Other excluded groups							
d) others							
<b>Total</b>							
Women headed households							

## 7.3 Information about annual progress report and auditing

a) Auditing completed

Yes  No

b) Annual progress report submitted to District Forest Office

Yes  No

## 8. Information about allocation of the land inside community forest area to the poor and excluded groups for income generating activities:

a) Area of the allocated land:  hectares

b) Fill in the details of beneficiary households in the following table

Social category	Well-being status (Participants number)			
	Poor	Medium	Wealthy	Remarks
a) <i>Dalit</i>				
b) Indigenous and ethnic groups				
c) Other excluded groups				
d) others				
<b>Total</b>				
Women headed households				

## 9) Details of employment

Fill in the table below the details of employment generated from the implementation of activities by the group

Employment and social category of the beneficiary	Employment (person days)						Beneficiary		Remarks
	Well-being status						From same group	From other group	
	Poor		Medium		Wealthy				
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men			
<b>A) Forest Watcher</b>									
1. <i>Dalit</i>									
2. Indigenous and ethnic groups									
3. Other excluded groups									
4. others									
5. Women headed household									
<b>B) Wage Labour</b>									
1. <i>Dalit</i>									
2. Indigenous and ethnic groups									
3. Other excluded groups									
4. others									
5. Women headed household									
<b>C) Office Assistant</b>									
1. <i>Dalit</i>									
2. Indigenous and ethnic groups									
3. Other excluded groups									
4. others									
5. Women headed household									

Employment and social category of the beneficiary	Employment (person days)						Beneficiary		Remarks
	Well-being status						From same group	From other group	
	Poor		Medium		Wealthy				
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men			
<b>D) Helper/Peon</b>									
1. <i>Dalit</i>									
2. Indigenous and ethnic groups									
3. Other excluded groups									
4. others									
5. Women headed household									
<b>E) Facilitators</b>									
1. <i>Dalit</i>									
2. Indigenous and ethnic groups									
3. Other excluded groups									
4. others									
5. Women headed household									
<b>F) Teacher</b>									
1. <i>Dalit</i>									
2. Indigenous and ethnic groups									
3. Other excluded groups									
4. others									
5. Women headed household									
<b>G) Others</b>									
1. <i>Dalit</i>									
2. Indigenous and ethnic groups									
3. Other excluded groups									
4. others									
5. Women headed household									

*Note: No need to mention well-being status if outsiders are employed. Mention only the person days in the remarks column that women or men are employed:*

**10. Looking at the overall work performance of Community Forest User Group, provide information in the table below:**

## 11. Other information

1. Root causes that influence work performance like boundary conflict
2. Change in the forest condition
3. Good practices of the user groups
4. Areas of improvements in the user group
5. Policy feedback
6. Suggestions for service providers
- 7.
- 8.

## 12. List of user group members involved in discussion during information collection

S. No.	Name	Position

### The person collecting the information

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signature:

### The person verifying the information

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signature:







