

Action Research on Community Forestry Planning



Community forestry operational plan (CFOP) is a legally binding contractual document that sets priorities and rules for forest management, use, benefit distribution and plan for mobilizing human and natural resources

Action research and analytical framework for CFOP

Problems and Challenges

- Backlog of OP revision
- Techno-bureaucratic resource assessment method
- Contested interpretation of legal provisions and OP
- High costs of OP revision
- Limited capacity and resources with CFUG, DFO and other service providers
- Conservative resource assessment

Analysis:

- Perceptions of different actors
- Legal texts
- OP contents
- Government instructions
- Resource assessment; AAC calculation



**ACTION
RESEARCH**



Expected Outcomes

- Innovative methodology for resource assessment
- Improved service delivery system
- Optimum harvesting; realistic resource assessment
- Generate evidences on for regulatory revisions

Action and engagement

- Improved resource assessment and planning
- Exercise on OP revision
- Workshops, capacity building
- Ongoing engagement with relevant actors
- Prioritize and implement livelihood activities

Steps adapted for OP preparation



| Steps | Rationales |
|--|---|
| Inception Planning: Visioning exercise; develop goals, working approach and feedback. | Build local preparedness; ensure active CFUG involvement; understand EC and CFUG concerns; set common targets; validate through local backing. |
| Social/Resource assessment: Boundary survey and resource inventory; social benefit analysis. | Gain precise knowledge; estimate forest resource supply; calculate equitable benefits |
| Draft Preparation: Prepare a full draft based on resource inventory and inputs from previous assessments and considerations. | Ensure the plan is based on appropriate science; increased legitimacy |
| EC and Tole meetings: Discuss key provisions; receive feedback from Tole members and sharing management concerns | Ensure CF members are adequately informed, accommodate priority and concerns of CFUG in OP; ensure local ownership |
| Endorsement and Approval: Finalise draft; present OP features; conciliation on disagreeing provisions; DFO approval and General Assembly. | Acquire full ownership of EC; adjust conflicting schemes; endorse through DFO; ensure compliance during its implementation; attain legal procedure during finalization. |
| Implementation and monitoring | Effective implementation; periodic assessment; identify space for OP improvement. |

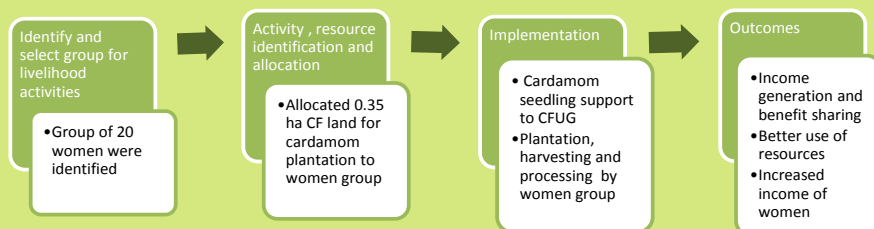
List of CFs supported in OP revision

| Name of CFUG | Address | Name of CFUG | Address |
|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Lampata | Tandrang Taksaar, Lamjung | Rakchhama | Choubaas, Kavre |
| Aapchour | Dhamilikuwa, Lamjung | Hile Jaljale 'Ka' | Nala Tukucha, Kavre |
| Dharapani | Choubaas, Kavre | Hile Jaljale 'Kha' | Nala Tukucha, Kavre |
| Lakuri Bhulbhule | Choubaas, Kavre | Dhunge Pakha Bahal | Nala Tukucha, Kavre |
| Narayansthan | Dhunkharka, Kavre | Faskot Sundar | Dhulikhel, Kavre |

Inclusive planning and livelihood activities

Operation Plans were revised with broader and intensive consultation with diverse social groups and accomodating emerging agenda – food security; climate change adaptation; inclusive forest management and livelihood activities for income generation.

Stages of livelihood activity practice in Fagarkhola



| List of Identified Group | Land Allocation (hector) | Cardamom Seeding Support | Average Annual Income (NRs) |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Women's Group (20 members) | 0.31 | 1200 | 35,000 |
| Women's Group (9 members) | 0.15 | 600 | 10,000 |
| CF plot-1 | 0.51 | 11200 | - (first year of plantation) |
| CF plot-2 | 0.28 | 3000 | - (first year of plantation) |
| Poor marginalized HHs | 0.15 (per HH) | 500 | - (first year of plantation) |



A member of womans group in Fagarkhola CF planting cardamom seedling.

Capacity Development

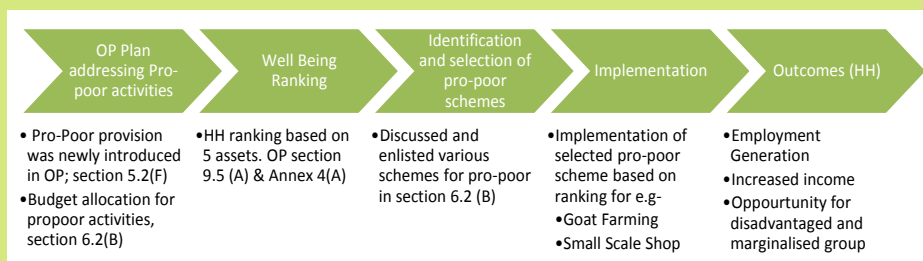
Engaged with women and marginalized group in various activities such as – leadership trainings, capacity building programs, exposure visits, Toile meetings and discussion forums has transformed these groups with informed knowledge and decision making ability with active participation.



| Events | District/ Place | Name of CFUG | Participants | | |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|--------------|----|----|
| | | | Total | F | D |
| CF leadership and governance training | Kavre, Dhunkharka | Kalapani, Gelkhola | 38 | 22 | 0 |
| Workshop on forest management and governance | Lamjung, Nalma | Langihariyali | 38 | 19 | 11 |
| Workshop on forest management and governance | Lamjung, Dhamilikuwa | Aapchaur | 33 | 12 | 2 |
| Workshop on forest management and governance | Lamjung, Jita Taksar | Lampata | 36 | 21 | 2 |
| Training on women Leadership in CF | Lamjung, Jita taksar | Lampata | 36 | 33 | 2 |

Envisoning Pro-Poor livelihood activities

Generating pro-poor livelihoods activity through participatory approach was updated in CFOP to address equitable benefit sharing.



Pro-poor livelihoods activity



Lessons learned

- CFUGs hardly follow the OP development process suggested by the existing policy guidelines mainly due to lack of time and resources. Changing rural livelihoods have changed people-forest relations and forest management priorities. EnLiFT work has developed strategic consultative process that significantly reduces time and resource demand without compromising critically needed inputs and ownership of CF members.
- Revision of whole OP (that have 5-year or 10-year duration) for any new intervention has been costly. EnLiFT OP work introduced and institutionalized a practice where provisions on specific interventions (for example establishing silvicultural demonstration plots) can be annexed to the existing OP, get DFO approval and implemented.
- This stream of work helped institutionalize the inclusive process in CF planning, and prioritizing livelihoods and food security outcomes from forest management. Traditionally, these were seen as opposite, but EnLiFT work showed that livelihoods can be enhanced from CF without compromising environmental aspects.

Voices of people

"...with new OP, we have various aspect improved.....most importantly we have openings for better inclusive working environment, we are happy with our new plan and diverse working scope..." Chairperson, Lampata CF

"...two years before- all of the leaders of CF were males, since the formulation of new OP, the position of secretary is led by the women." Secretary, Dharapani CF

"How can any community forest harvest timber in a situation where huge number of OPs is backlogged. OP backlog is one of the important reasons behind the closure of Chaubas sawmill, which is an exemplary of community managed enterprise. The current OPs do not fulfill the sentiments and requirement of communities and therefore needs some rethinking." Rajan Pokharel, DG, Department of Forest



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