Participants and participation in the management of natural resources within Forest Users' Groups (FUG) a social-cultural study in the middle hills of two districts of Nepal

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Participants and Participation in the Management of Natural Resources within Forest Users’ Groups (FUG)

A Social-Cultural Study in the Middle Hills of two Districts of Nepal

Christian Rosset

Zurich 2002
PARTICIPANTS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE
MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
WITHIN FOREST USERS’ GROUPS (FUG)

A SOCIAL-CULTURAL STUDY IN THE MIDDLE HILLS
OF TWO DISTRICTS OF NEPAL
Preface

This paper is an executive summary of a four months' diploma thesis in Nepal and Switzerland within the Nepali Swiss Community Forestry Project (NSCFP) and the Department of Forestry Sciences (D-FOWI) of the ETH Zurich - Switzerland. The original version is in French and available with the author (Christian Rosset, Chair of Silviculture, ETHZ, Rämistr. 101, 8092 Zurich, Switzerland, tel.: 0041 1 632 49 49, e-mail: rosset@fowi.ethz.ch) or by NSCFP.

Foreword

Participation of local village communities in forest protection and management is one of the most salient features of joint natural resources management policies in the whole of the Indian subcontinent, if not in the majority of the world’s developing countries. A district in central Nepal has been chosen for this study which ranks high among those mountainous countries with a precarious situation as far as forest cover and the supply with forest products is concerned. Much is known about the recent history of Nepal’s Community Forestry Programme and its effects on forest growth and the environment which was launched with the help of international donors and the Nepalese Forestry Service. Little is known, however, on the social dynamics of access to and participation in local forest user groups, particularly in the mid-hills of this Himalayan kingdom that tried to decentralise administrational power and democratise the use and management of local resources over the last decade.

Mr. Rosset’s study succeeds to draw a vivid picture of the local people’s perceptions of their community forests, their expectations for the future, their anxieties and the shortcomings of the Community Forestry Programme due to caste hierarchy and differences of social status and power. He provides the reader with rich empirical data collected in interviews with ordinary members of forest user groups and executive committee members. These data show how local political and social conditions determine what is meant to be joint forest management. The potentials as well as the limitations of a policy programme in three remote villages are focused in which life is highly stratified, predominantly according to the socio-cultural norms and values of Hinduism. To acknowledge these constraints and to take them into account is a fundamental step to understand a society better which is in transition from feudal to democratic living conditions. Only in this way, it seems that a realistic comprehension is possible of what policies can achieve in attempting to manage natural resources in a sustainable way.

I am glad to emphasise that this study could be guided in an interdisciplinary perspective by Dr. Jean-Pierre Sorg of the Chair of Silviculture, and PD Dr. Klaus Seeland, Chair of Forest Policy and Forest Economics, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich, who are very well acquainted with the forests and the societies of the Himalayas. Furthermore it gained much from the support by Mr. Robin aus der Beek, forest advisor to the Nepal-Swiss Community Forestry Project (NSCFP), whose help was much appreciated during the data collection in the field. Mr. Sitaram Basnet was an indispensable interviewer and interpreter and contributed substantially to the success of this valuable study on the implementation of a programme that, if successful, could decide a lot of the fate and future of the Nepalese forests.

Franz Schmithüsen
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1. Problems and Background of the Study

The consideration of the forest and the role of the people who depend directly and daily on their surrounding forest patches has changed considerably in Nepal over the last three decades. Scenarios developed during the seventies have foreseen the destruction in the short term\(^1\) of the middle hills' forests of the Nepali kingdom. The approach to the problem was mainly focused on ecological issues (state of the forest) and the forest users were considered as the cause of the problem, since the middle hills were characterised by a high demographic growth in a society depending mainly on agriculture on terraces, which should result in an increasing pressure on the forest because of an increasing demand on firewood, farmland and grazing land.

Fortunately, these scenarios have not become reality. Considering many studies, Gilmour and Fisher (1992) even mention the fact that the forest area has not decreased for the last hundred years. However, the forest condition and, logically, the capacity of the forest to satisfy the daily needs of the villagers still remain a problem. The way to consider this problem is, a decade later, radically different from the seventies. The significance of the social component of the forest has become acknowledged. The forest users are seen as possible actors to solve the problem and their knowledge of their forest is taken into account. The Program of Community Forestry (PCF) started to develop on these grounds. The program aims to transfer the right to manage national forests to the local communities who depend on them, i.e. the Forest Users’ Groups (FUG). As policeman before, the forester is becoming an adviser.

By 1999, more than 7'800 FUG have been recognised by the government. About 880'000 households were members of these FUG (i.e. around 20% of the households of Nepal) and 550'000 ha of forest were managed by them. The total forest cover of Nepal was 5'000'000 ha. These numbers reveal the significance that the PCF gained since 1990, as the government seriously started to hand over national forests to FUG.

![Map of Nepal and its five physiographic zones](image)

Fig. 1.1 Map of Nepal and its five physiographic zones\(^2\)

The rectangle visualises the approximate location of the districts of Dolakha and Ramechhap (study area)

1990 was a year of big changes in the Hindu kingdom, since Nepal has become a democracy. Regarding the PCF, the changes were not only limited to the transfer of forest areas. A democratisation process has also taken place. Before 1990, the representatives of the villages

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\(^1\) This short term was estimated 15 years in a report of the World Bank published in 1978.

\(^2\) HMGN, 1989, pp. 7-9
(called at that time ‘panchayat village’) were responsible for the management of the forests that were handed over. After that year, the executive committee of the FUG was elected by the members of the group and the FUG do not depend upon administration units like the Village Development Committee (VDC), which is the smallest one in Nepal, anymore.

In that recent context of democratisation and decentralisation, this paper aims to study the participation of the members of the FUG in the Decision Making Process (DMP) of the management of their Community Forest (CF), with particular respect to the participation of the disadvantaged people, since these people seem to have fewer opportunities of taking advantage of the new situation. The first main research question of the thesis is the following:

Which factors have an influence on the participation in the decision making process of the management of natural resources within the FUG, with particular respect to the disadvantaged people?

The villagers’ perception of the forest is the second main focus of the study, considering the forest as the main object of the participation. Furthermore, this subject is of particular interest in a multicultural study. The second main research question is:

What is the FUG members’ perception of the forest?

The design of this paper is the following. After setting the framework of the study (ch. 2) and introducing the methodology (ch. 3), chapter 4 presents the results. A synthesis and a discussion of the results are included in chapter 5. This paper ends with a conclusion (ch. 6) and some recommendations (ch. 7).

2. OBJECTIVES AND FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1 SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research questions have been introduced in chapter 1. The following specific research questions aim to guide the study:

- What are the formal (and informal) institutions of the FUG, their functions and the way they function?
- What is the FUG members’ perception of the forest, with consideration of their CF?
- Which interests have the members to participate in the decision making (DM) related to the management of natural resources, with particular regard to disadvantaged people?
  - Which values and expectations have the members regarding the management of natural resources?
  - How important is the CF for the members in terms of their needs’ satisfaction?
- How do the members participate in the DM related to the management of natural resource?
  - How do they express their interest within the FUG?
  - How do they influence, directly or indirectly, the content of the decisions accepted by the FUG?
- Why do they participate in that way?
2.2 FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY AND DEFINITION OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

Figure 2.1 presents the framework of the study. Its function is to introduce the elements that were determined as significant, considering the two main research questions. These elements will be explained in the next sections.

Fig. 2.1 Framework of the study

The policy arena represents the space where the participation in the DMP of the FUG takes place. The model is situated in its environment, i.e. its sociocultural environment, the institutions that characterise it and the natural resources that are the object of the DMP. The right side of the model shows the different steps between the formulation of the decisions, their enforcement by the concerned people and the real outputs.

The arrows used in the figure represent the dynamic of the system. They do not indicate the kind, the direction or the importance of the interactions between the elements, since it is the very purpose of this paper to study them.

a) Arena: actors and their situation

GILMOUR and FISHER (1992, p. 75) point out that „(c)ommunity forestry is concerned with control of resources, i.e. it is a political issue“. From this point of view, it is interesting to introduce the concept of policy arena.

SCHMITHÜSEN defined this concept as following:

The concept policy arena characterises the kind and the way political processes, which are linked with the settlement of conflicts and the way to find a consensus, take place.3

The arena represents the space where the actors elaborate their strategy and act in specific situations. The actors’ position and the information to which the actors have access are significant characteristics of these situations. The results of these interactions are the decisions that are taken within the institutional framework.

Two categories of actors related to the FUG are defined in this paper. The first one is the institutional actors, who are recognised and defined in a constitution of a FUG (e.g. the members, the assemblies and the executive committee of the FUG). The second category consists of the organisations and people who are not mentioned in a constitution, but who want to express and defend their interests (e.g. NGO or community forestry projects like the Nepal Swiss Community

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3 “Mit dem Begriff Politikarena werden die Art und der Ablauf politischer Prozesse gekennzeichnet, die mit der Austragung von Konflikten und der Konsensfindung verbunden sind.”
Forestry Project - NSCFP). The District Forest Office (DFO) has an intermediate status (see ch. 4.3)

b) Institutions
The concept of institution used in this paper corresponds to the concept defined by SCHMITHÜSEN:

The term institution [...] is generally related to persistent structures in the interaction between people and are thus gaining an evolutionary advantage. At the individual level, institutions lead to certain expectations in human behaviour. Due to their relative persistence they are in a position to provide people with a feeling of security with regard to common patterns of meaning and social action.4

An important point of SCHMITHÜSEN’s definition is the emphasis on long-term stability of institutions.

c) Natural resources
The concept of natural resources corresponds to the definition of KISSLING-NÄF:

From a social-scientific point of view and considering the concept of natural resource, the nature and the environment are only significant considering the human needs.5

A resource is significant only if it can be understood as a need for somebody (e.g. petroleum was not a resource before 1800). Since this thesis focuses on the FUG, the resources considered further are mainly the natural resources of the CF. A CF could be made out of brushland as well as of a dense stocking of big trees. The term ‘forest’ has to be considered in a broad sense. Other kinds of woodland like governmental forests or private lands (agroforestry) have also been taken into account, since they provide about the same natural resources as the CF.

d) Management of natural resources
The management of natural resources is defined as the elaboration and organisation of the measures related to the protection, conservation, development and exploitation of the CF, as well as the distribution of the benefits of its exploitation according to clearly formulated objectives.

e) Phenomenon of the woodland and perception
The forest resources are just an aspect of what we could call the phenomenon of the woodland. The concept of phenomenon has to be related within a human perspective.

f) Participation in the decision making process (DMP)
The notion of participation could apply to different levels of the management of natural resources (i.e. DMP, enforcement of decision, monitoring). This study mainly focuses on the participation in the DMP and on the members of the FUG as actors of this participation. The definition of problems and the decision making make out the DMP.

g) Disadvantaged groups or people
The adjective disadvantaged identifies a target group of this study. Its definition is not simple, since the concept is quite subjective and depending on the context in which it is used.

4 „Der Begriff der Institutionen [...] verweist in der Regel auf überdauernde Einrichtungen in der zwischenmenschlichen Ordnung, die dadurch einen evolutiven Vorteil gewinnt. Institutionen führen auf der individuellen Ebene zu bestimmten Verhaltenserwartungen. Sie sind aufgrund ihrer relativen Konstanz in der Lage, ein gewisses Mass an Sicherheit bezüglich gemeinsamer Deutungs- und Handlungsmuster zu vermitteln“
5 „In einer sozialwissenschaftlichen Perspektive wird mit dem Begriff und Konzept der Ressource darauf hingewiesen, dass die Natur oder Umwelt nur bezogen auf menschliche Bedürfnisse eine Bedeutung hat.“
H.L. Paudel (1998, p. 7) uses the term of „less privileged people“ (LPP), which he links with the economic and social status, as well as the health of these people. He asked the members of the three FUG he studied to define by their own the LPP. For that purpose, he used PRA tools (Participatory Rural Appraisal). The members chose three criteria: the land ownership, the number of cattle they possess and the school level. They designated the people belonging to the category of the less privileged as ‘nimchhara’ (Nepali).

Ten staff members of the NSCFP had been asked before the fieldwork for criteria that defined disadvantaged people. PRA tools were also used. The answers were with decreasing number of mentions: caste, land ownership, food sufficiency, school level, women and income.

No definition of disadvantaged is given in this section. This concept will be defined as Paudel did: by asking the villagers, who know the context of their village best. The adjectives disadvantaged/advantaged and privileged/unprivileged are further considered as synonyms.

3. Methodology

This is a case study which analyses the actors and the institutions in their context, related to the management of natural resources. The selection of the study cases is the subject of the first section of this chapter, the methods used to gather the information will be explained in the second section and the subject of the last section is the method to analyse the data.

3.1 Selection of the Case Studies

The selection has been done in two districts where the NSCFP has its activities: the districts of Dolakha and Ramechhap6. Considering the limited time (4 months) of the study and an estimation of 5 to 6 days for the fieldwork per study case, the number of FUG being visited had be fixed to four. The selection criteria were:

- Politically sensitive areas are not taken into account.
- The FUG has to be located in the middle hills, because „(i)t is .. where there is extreme pressure on the forest and where livelihood are most intimately associated with forests.“ (Hobley, 1996, p. 22).
- The FUG has to be handed over before 1997. The members should have the opportunity to gather experiences in the participation in the DMP of their group at least for 2 years. FUG formed before 1994 were not taken into account, because „(t)he quality of the O(perational) P(lan) and constitutions formed at that time was quite poor“ (NSCFP, 1999).
- The number of HH of the FUG should not be too low (below 50), because the DMP is likely to be the more informal, the smaller the group is. This group should not be too big (above 150), since only 10 to 15 people were foreseen to be interviewed. The bigger the number of HH, the higher is the risk to interview somebody who could represent a special case.
- At least 10% of the HH has to belong to the untouchables (castes of Kami, Sarki and Damai), which is one of the criteria to define disadvantaged people (see ch. 2.2).

The selection has been based mainly on the information gathered by Lafranchi (1998) in the constitutions and Operational Plans (OP) of the FUG. The dates of the formation of the FUG have been gathered by the DFO of Dolakha and by the District Coordination Office of NSCFP in Ramechhap.

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6 The third district where the NSCFP has its activities has not been taken into account, because of the recent joint implementation (1999) of the PCF with the District Forest Office (DFO) and the poor knowledge the villagers of this districts seem to have about the PCF (DAHAL, 1999, pp. 26-27).
3.2 TECHNIQUES OF GATHERING INFORMATION

3.2.1 Secondary sources of information: literature research

The purpose of a literature research was to take into account the studies already done on the same subject in Nepal and to understand the sociocultural context of the FUG and the legislation related to the PCF better. Documents of the UK project (NUCFP), the Austrian project (NACRMP) and NSCFP, as well as other documents, have been considered.

3.2.2 Primary sources of information

The main source of primary information is the information gathered with the individual structured interview. This technique has been chosen to consider the DMP directly through the participants themselves and to simplify the comparison between the interviews of different people of different FUG. Beside the individual interviews, other techniques have been used to consider different aspects of the problem. These techniques have been designed to enable people to participate actively (see JACKSEN & INGLES, 1995, for information about RRA and PRA). These techniques were participatory mapping to let the villagers visualise their CF and wealth ranking to acknowledge the socioeconomical situation of the visited FUG and to discuss about the concept of disadvantaged people. The documents of the FUG (constitution and OP, minute book) have been consulted and semi-structured group interviews with three to five members of the EC have been conducted for complementary questions not found in the official documents (see annexe 1 for a copy of the form used during the semi-structured group interview).

Individual structured interviews (ISI)

A copy of the forms used during the fieldwork can be found in annexe 2. Please note the broad diversity of the languages involved in the conception of the form and its utilisation, since not less than nine people of different mother tongues have been involved. The answers have been written in Nepali on a school notebook not to be too formal and translated in English after the end of the interview.

The structure of the form is as following:

a) The person and the FUG
   process of becoming a member of a FUG and consideration of the activities of the group

b) The person and the CF
   satisfaction of the needs and different consideration of the forest, since it became an official CF

c) Participation of the person in the DMP
   attendance to assemblies, voicing of interests and influence on the decisions taken by the group

d) Participation in the DMP from the point of view of the members of the executive committees
   difficulties of the members of the FUG to take an active part in the DMP and possible improvements

e) Perception of the forest
   description of the forest

f) Sociocultural attributes
   caste/ethnic, age, school level, economical status and experiences in an executive committee

7 The author’s mother tongue is French, one of the co-referents is German. The questions have been written in English and discussed with the forest adviser of NFCFP, whose mother tongue is Swiss Italian. The questions have been translated in Nepali by a Limbu and have been asked to Tamang, Magar, Shresta, which all are ethnic groups with their own language.
A PRA exercise (matrix ranking) has been used to assess the satisfaction of the needs in forest products (point b).

The selection of the villagers to be interviewed has been done considering the first main research question (i.e. participation in DMP, with particular respect to the disadvantaged people). It was not possible to work with statistically representative groups, because of the great heterogeneity which characterises the FUG, the poor information that was available and the limited time we spent in the FUG.

The disadvantaged people and the members of the executive committee as privileged actors of the DMP were two target groups for the interviews. A third group takes the other members of the FUG into account to compare the answers of the two other groups with them.

The criteria of the selection are mainly based on the cultural belonging, since this information is the most accessible and is of importance in a hierarchical society. The criteria are:

- At least 10 people per FUG
- Three members of the castes Damai, Kami and Sarki (castes of untouchables)
- At least three members of the executive committee, of which one is a woman or an untouchable
- Two members of the castes with the biggest number of HH, of which one is considered, by at least three people of the FUG, as disadvantaged (nimchhara)
- The members belonging to other ethnic groups or castes

The selection within the visited families has been done while asking the family members who take the decisions related to the FUG.

Photo 1

Individual interview and use of PRA tools

The person in the middle of the photo is Sitaram Basnet, who helped during the fieldwork. The PRA tool displayed on the photo is a matrix ranking (see questions 7 – 8).
3.3 Data Analysis

This chapter presents the methods used to analyse the answers of the individual interviews. The information gained from other techniques has been analysed qualitatively. The answers of the interviews have been structured and transferred to a database (Microsoft Access 7.0) elaborated for the purpose of this study.

Open questions

Most of the questions are “open questions”. A first attempt to analyse the answers was to list them and to group the similar answers. Considering the number of the interviews performed (34), generally not more than five categories have been defined on this list. At the end, each answer has been considered to determine to which category(ies) it is linked.

Sociocultural status

The analysis of the sociocultural status aims to determine three categories, which should define homogeneous groups of people related to their status (disadvantaged, intermediate and advantaged). These categories are of great importance, since they represent the key to analyse the answers of the other questions (point a - e) by creating pivot tables. More than three categories would weaken the results of the analysis of the other questions by reducing the number of people in a group and making the distribution of the answers more aleatory. Less than three categories would probably make it not possible to have homogeneous groups, at least to form an intermediate group.

The affiliation of an interviewed person to one of the three categories is based on different sociocultural attributes that had to be defined after having considered the results of the wealth ranking exercises (see ch. 2.2g for the reasons). The interviewed people’s attributes are grouped for each attribute in three degrees: low, intermediate and high. The criterion to belong to the low degree corresponds to a value below which the 9 to 11 people with the lowest values of the attribute are located (e.g. if the 9 poorest interviewed people have less than 5 ropani, the criterion will be this very value). The criterion to determine the high degree is fixed in the same way. The flexibility to choose between 9 and 11 people, respectively a quarter to a third of all interviewed people, should allow to define more or less homogeneous groups (e.g. if nine people have all less than five cattle and the two next one have 10 cattle each, the criterion of the low degree will be the ownership of not more than five cattle).

The final attribution of an interviewed person to a status category is based on a pointing system. Each attribute gets a number of points, which are positive if the person belongs to a high degree or negative in the opposite case. The sum of all points defines the person’s status.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Presentation of the Three Case Studies

The FUG of Bhudha Bhimsen is the only one, which has a direct connection to a road suitable for motor vehicles (i.e. the Lamosangu-Jiri connection). The FUG is about half an hour away from Charikot, the district headquarters of Dolakha, and about eight hours from Kathmandu by bus. It is necessary to walk at least half an hour from the other FUG to reach the first road and then to travel about one and half hours to reach Charikot (see ch. 1 for the location of the two districts). All FUG are to be found in the Taamaa Koshi valley. The habitations are mainly located between 900 and 1600 m.

8 Sources: Operational Plan, wealth ranking, LAFRINGCHI (1998, annexe 6 and 7, actualised)
About 130 HH are members of Budikhoriya FUG, 160 of Bhudha Bhimsen FUG and 200 of Piple FUG\(^9\). Two thirds of the households (HH) of Budikhoriya FUG are Shresta as well as two thirds of the HH of Bhudha Bhimsen FUG are Chhetri. The Chhetri represent the main caste in Piple, although with a proportion of one third only. This FUG has the greatest diversity of castes and ethnic groups - not less than 10 - of the three visited villages.

![Ethnic and caste composition of the three FUG](image.png)

There are very few opportunities of remuneration besides an archaic agriculture on terraces. Immigration is not negligible in the three FUG\(^10\). Among 40 to 70 people per FUG work outside their village.

About 60% of the members of the FUG of Bhudha Bhimsen and Budikhoriya own less than 10 ropani (20 ropani are equal to 1 hectare). They are only 45% in Piple. This criterion has to be considered carefully regarding the fluctuation of the productivity of land within a FUG (depending for example of the altitude) and between FUG. Only 10% of the people in Budikhoriya had a school leaving certificate (SLC) in 1995. This percentage was lower in the two other FUG. All of the three community forests (CF) have been overexploited before the formation of the FUG. The CF of Piple is the biggest one with 200 ha. Although it is degraded in the surroundings of the habitations, there are still parts which are more or less preserved. The ratio between the CF area (ha) and the number of HH is about 1.0 in that FUG, two times more than in the two other FUG. The good forest condition in Budikhoriya allow the members to cover 75% of their needs (mention in the OP). The FUG of Bhudha Bhimsen has probably the greatest difficulties to supply its members with forest products, since the area is small (ratio of 0.5) and a substantial part of the CF is made out of young pine plantations. Agroforestry seems to be widely practised in the three FUG.

\(^9\) 75 HH became members in 1998 of Piple FUG. These people are living in an other VDC - one walk hour away from the centre of the FUG - and still have few contacts with the other members. They were not considered in the study.

\(^{10}\) Working with the hypothesis that there are not more than two people per HH who immigrate, the proportion of families concerned by this phenomenon is between a fifth and a quarter of total number of HH in the FUG.
4.2 Institutional Actors and Natural Resources Management System

Each FUG has its own constitution and the operational plan (OP) is a part of it. Through its assembly, the group is the highest institution (organe suprême) of the FUG. It has the possibility to amend the constitution under the approval of the DFO. It elects the executive committee (EC), which has the power to enforce the constitution and the OP, as well as the decisions taken by the assembly. The DFO is responsible for the legislation to be respected by the FUG. The objectives of the FUG are the conservation of the CF, the improvement of its conditions and its exploitation for the benefit of the members.

The EC disposes of an OP to manage the CF, which is according to the FUG more or less detailed (in decreasing order: Budikhoriya, Bhudha Bhimsen and Piple). The EC suggests the assembly measures to perform. The users themselves watch the CF according to a rotation system (Budikhoriya and Piple) or a watchman is paid by the FUG (Bhudha Bhimsen). A sanction system is foreseen in case of breaking the FUG rules. The users have to take part in fire fighting actions, as well as in measures taken to stabilise dangerous slopes. Plantations on uncovered land or enrichment plantations (fruit trees, fodder trees) are also carried out to improve the forest condition. Silvicultural operations are accomplished by all members, who then get the products of their work (nothing is lost in a society depending on wood as main source of energy). Timber is distributed considering individual demands.

4.3 Dynamics of the Three FUG

The EC of all three FUG meets 8 to 12 times a year to take decisions, in average three per meeting. About the same number of decisions are taken during the assemblies of Piple and Budikhoriya, which is very low in comparison to Bhudha Bhimsen (16 decisions on the average). The frequencies in which the assemblies are held could partly explain this difference (one ordinary a year in Bhudha Bhimsen in comparison to two to three in the two other FUG). The decisions taken are not limited to the CF management, but also deal with the development of the community. Some decisions were taken in Bhudha Bhimsen to regulate conflicts that had nothing to do with the forest.

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11 Sources: constitution, Operational Plan, semi-structure group interview
12 except in Piple: the users have to pay a tax of 5 Rs per day for not accomplished work
13 Sources: minute books of the last three years
The attendance at the assemblies is the lowest in Piple (about 45%) and highest in Bhudha Bhimsen and Budikhoriya (about 75%). The quorum in the constitution could explain the high proportion (about 2/3) in the two other FUG. There is no cultural group that is under or over-represented at the assemblies (see fig.4.2 below).

Fig. 4.2 Attendance at three assemblies and cultural groups

Total: corresponds to the proportion of the cultural group (taagaadhaari, maatwaali, untouchable) in a FUG independently of the attendance of its members at an assembly (see fig. 4.1). A1: last assembly; A2: second last assembly, etc.

4.4 THE PARTICIPANTS

This chapter focuses on the participants in the DMP, i.e. the users and the members of the EC. The sociocultural profile is first studied (a), then the phenomenon of woodland (b), the process to become a member of a FUG (d), the significance of the CF (e) and the activities of their FUG (f-g).

a) Sociocultural Profile

The interviewed people are not representative for their FUG (which is not the focus of this study, see ch. 3.2.2a). Minorities, especially untouchables (11/34) and members of EC (10/34) are over-represented in the 34 interviewed people’s group.

Tab. 4.1 Cultural groups: number of people interviewed and proportion in the FUG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural group</th>
<th>Piple</th>
<th>Budikhoriya</th>
<th>Bhudha Bhimsen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interviewed people</td>
<td>proportion in the FUG (HH)</td>
<td>interviewed people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taagaadhaari</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>37 %</td>
<td>1 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maatwaali</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
<td>50 %</td>
<td>5 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untouchables</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>13 %</td>
<td>4 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12 (100%)</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>10 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The attributes to define disadvantaged people during the „wealth ranking“ exercises were most of the time linked with the economic status: land ownership, number of cattle, food sufficiency, and income opportunities. The school level was used too. These attributes correspond to what PAUDEL (c.f. ch. 2.2g) and the interviewed members of NSCFP have mentioned. Considering this, the attributes and their criteria used to define to which social category the people belong are set in the table below. The experiences in DMP gained by people involved in an executive committee of an organisation have also been taken into account. The parameter considered is the

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14 Sources: individual interviews
membership in an executive committee and the position the person has (e.g. chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer).

Tab 4.2 Criteria to define the social status of the 34 interviewed people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria disadvantaged</th>
<th>advantaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land ownership</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>&lt;= 5 ropani</td>
<td>&gt;= 20 ropani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio ‘Rop/PP’*</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>&lt; 0.5</td>
<td>&gt; 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Cattle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt; 2</td>
<td>&gt;= 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main activity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>labour (^{15})</td>
<td>regular income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>illiterate</td>
<td>SLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of an EC**</td>
<td>½ - 1½</td>
<td></td>
<td>EC member (½) with a position (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total points determine the social status ***: disadvantaged: <= -2.5 advantaged: >= +2.5

* Not only the land ownership seems to be an important attribute to define the social status, but also the total number of ropani divided by the number of people depending on it. For example, somebody answered that he owns 62 ropani and explained further that 23 people depend on it. Therefore this attribute has been split into two: Land owning and Ratio „Rop/PP“ (Rop: ropani; PP: people depending on the ropani).

** A person could be member of different executive committees. The maximal points she could get are 1½ points.

*** Points obtained in the category disadvantaged are negative; they are positive in the category advantaged. All points are added and the total determines to which social status the interviewed person belongs to.

Cultural group status has not been taken into account in the definition of the social status. The reason is that this attribute seems to be directly linked with the social status in a caste society.

In the followings the main outputs of the analysis of the sociocultural attributes related to the FUG, the cultural groups and the social status are summarised.

**Forest users’ groups**

- The people interviewed in Bhudha Bhimsen are mostly able to read and write Nepali, but have not attended school. Half of the people interviewed in Piple have been to school and with one exception the others are illiterate.
- The FUG of Budikhoriya is characterised with the highest proportion of poor and disadvantaged people (5/10), while Piple has the lowest ratio (just 1/12).

**Cultural groups**

- No taagaadhaari (Chhetri, Bahun) is illiterate, poor or disadvantaged. On the contrary, all untouchables have not attended school and are not considered as advantaged.
- Most of the taagaadhaari (6/8) were or are members of an executive committee.
- The maatwaali (Shresta, Tamang, Magar) are an intermediate group, since no particular feature could be recognised. Most of the maatwaali are Shresta (10/14).
- The cultural group with the most interviewed people are the Shresta (10). There are people considered as advantaged as well as disadvantaged.

\(^{15}\) labour: people without secure income, have to work on demand
Social status

Nobody who is untouchable, illiterate, poor or without experiences of an executive committee membership is considered as advantaged (see fig. 4.3 and tab. 4.2 and tab. 4.3). On the contrary, nobody who has a SLC, is taagaadhaari, rich or member of an executive committee is considered as disadvantaged.

The majority of the interviewed people who are disadvantaged (5/9) is to be found in Budikhoriya FUG.

Disadvantaged people have very few cattle and ropani in comparison to the others (see circle in the figure).

The results presented in tab. 4.2 shows that only advantaged people have obtained a school leaving certificate and that most of the disadvantaged people are illiterate.

All people considered as disadvantaged in this study are no members of an executive committee, while almost all of the advantaged people are or were members of an EC.

b) Perception of the forest

The phenomenon of woodlands has been studied by asking people to explain terms used to designate them (forest, jungle, tree, shrub). They were also asked whether they went alone into
forest areas, since informal discussions prior to the fieldwork pointed out, that people were afraid to go alone sometimes.

The utilisation of structured interviews has shown its limits. The subject was obviously new and difficult to speak about for the interviewed people. They had to explain to a foreigner a part of their environment that they are used to see and not to describe. Further, it seems that the school level is related to the number and diversity of the answers (see tab. 4.4).

Tab. 4.4 School level and diversity of the answers (Q25a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School level</th>
<th>Number of elements mentioned on the average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>school leaving certificate</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have been in school</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>literate</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illiterate</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all levels</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of elements means how many times the answer given by an interviewed person (Q25a: explanation of the forest) has been sorted out in the following categories: i) forest products, ii) infrastructure and services (e.g. erosion, water supply), iii) plants and animals, iv) human intervention (i.e. plantation or silvicultural operations that make the forest), v) significance for human beings (e.g. „the forest is a friend for the life“), vi) „the forest is the forest“ and vii) others.

Different ways were used to explain the term forest (ban): most of the time by the resources available in the forest and by its constituents (trees, shrubs and seedlings). Some people explained that they „made the forest“ (ban banaune) through plantation or silvicultural operations.

Most of the advantaged people think that the forest (ban) is different from the jungle (jangal), in contrast to other interviewed people. The differences are the dimensions (the area covered by jungle is bigger and its trees are taller) and the danger to enter the jungle, because of wild animals to be found there. The majority of the interviewed people in Piple do not enter the forest alone, probably because of its size (200 ha). A tree is different from a shrub because of its dimension. One quarter of the people also mentioned the distinct forest products that can be used from the two plants.

c) Adhesion to a FUG

This section aims to study the motivations and the difficulties the people have to become a member of a FUG and the changes in their perception of the CF since their adhesion. All interviewed people became members of their FUG at its formation and no one complained about difficulties. One third of the people said that they discussed the issue with their family before deciding to join a FUG. The majority of the untouchables did not discuss it with anyone. The main reasons to join a FUG were the possibility to get forest products and to protect the forest (Q2b). While all advantaged people mentioned the former reason, few disadvantaged did. The same cleavage could be observed between taagaadhaari and untouchables (see tab. 4.5).

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16 They were not asked to explain their forest, but the forest. It could make a difference, since it is probably easier to explain something to visualise (their forest) than something which is an abstract concept (the forest).

17 This does not mean that nobody experienced difficulties. While talking informally in tea-shops, it appeared that membership to a political or to another administrative unit than the one were most of the FUG members live, or immigration of a husband, are factors that do not help to become a member of a FUG.
Tab. 4.5  **Forest products and protection of the CF as reasons to become a member of a FUG (Q2b)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social status</th>
<th>Forest products</th>
<th>Protection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mentioned</td>
<td>not ment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advantaged</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intermediate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disadvantaged</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than 80% of the interviewed people perceive their CF differently. The reasons were the better forest condition, its protection against overuse and the possibility or easy access to forest products.

d) **Significance of the community forest**

This section attempts to acknowledge the religious significance of the CF, as well as its significance as resource of forest products.

Religious ceremonies take place in the CF of Piple and Bhudha Bhimsen, not in Budikhoriya. Except these gatherings, most of the interviewed people do not seem to go to the CF to perform religious duties.18 Firewood is by far considered the most important forest product, before timber and fodder, probably because it is the main energy supply. Kerosene is rarely used and electricity, if available, is for lighting. While few chemical fertilisers are utilised in Piple and Budikhoriya, their utilisation in Bhudha Bhimsen seems already to degrade the quality of the soil.

CF and private fields are the main sources of supply of forest products. Rich people mostly consider their private fields as main source of subsistence.

The exploitation of the CF seems to improve and seems to end the past overuse stage and most of the people think they will get more forest products in the future.

e) **Satisfaction of the needs and consented investments**

The aim of this section is to study the satisfaction of the people considering the quantities of forest products they get from the CF and the investment in terms of money and time they have to provide to get access to these products. The questions were formulated in a way people express their dissatisfaction. Two thirds of the interviewed people want more forest products, especially firewood, timber and fodder. The main reasons mentioned were their availability on private land in too small quantities and particular needs of timber to build or maintain houses. Most of the disadvantaged people expressed their needs to get more forest products. Among the three FUG, the highest demand on extra forest products is found in Bhudha Bhimsen, probably because this FUG has the smallest ratio ha/HH and young pine plantations make a significant part of its CF.

The activities normally performed within the FUG are: CF watching, silvicultural operations and exploitation of forest products. 80% of the interviewed people do not think they have to work too much. The reasons mentioned were the participation of all users in these activities, the possibility of getting forest products and to improve the forest condition. Only half of the interviewed people think the prices asked for forest products are not high. The highest proportion of people not agreeing with the prices is to be found in Budikhoriya (6/10) and the lowest in Piple (2/12). In contrast to the advantaged people (4/11), disadvantaged people (5/8) answered mainly that the prices were too high.

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18 One lady mentioned the fact that she goes with her family for picnic.
f) Protection of the CF against misuse

OSTROM suggests that the protection of the CF against misuses is an important factor for the stability of an organisation (cf. ch. 2.2). If the users feel the CF is not protected enough, they will, most likely, not be interested in spending more time and money for it without being sure of getting benefits. That is the „free rider“ problem that Ostrom (1990, p. 6) explains as follows:

„Whenever one person cannot be excluded from the benefits that others provide, each person is motivated not to contribute to the joint effort, but to free-ride on the efforts of others. If all participants choose to free-ride, the collective benefit will not be produced. The temptation to free-ride, however, may dominate the decision process, and thus all will end up where no one wanted to be.“

The majority of the people think their CF is protected enough against the misuse of outsiders (70%) and especially against the misuse of insiders (95%). Problems with the boundaries of the FUG could explain the lower first percentage. According to Mr. Sitaram Basnet, Chairperson of FECOFUN Dolakha19, this problem is probably the most important the FUG have to face at that time.

g) Knowledge about the FUG fund and opinion about its utilisation

The utilisation of the FUG fund could be the subject of intense discussions, since people have the opportunity to discuss about expenditures (e.g. construction of a temple, support of poor families) and incomes (e.g. penalties). Topics of this section are the knowledge the users have about their fund and the opinion they have about its utilisation. Provisions in the constitutions about the fund are first presented.

The three constitutions contain provisions related to the establishment of a FUG fund and its management. A bank account has to be opened for that exclusive purpose and a treasurer is responsible of its management. At least once a year, the details of the fund have to be presented at an assembly. A copy has to be sent to the DFO. The users have the right to refuse them and to entrust a third person with an audit. The main incomes are the sales of forest products, encashment of penalties, loans and financial supports of the government or other organisations. Notice that at least 25% of the expenditures have to be invested to develop the CF (Forest Act, 1999).

The amounts of the funds of Bhudha Bhimsen, Budikhoriya and Piple are 60'000, 83'000 and 85'000 NRs respectively. These amounts are by far not negligible. A labourer gets among 50 to 70 NRs a day. While at least two thirds of the advantaged people know the amount of their fund20 (Q22a), the way it is used (Q22b) and the name of its responsible person(Q22c), not more than one third of the disadvantaged people were able to answer to this question correctly. Considering the other sociocultural attributes, untouchable, illiterate and poor people answered like the disadvantaged people. Nobody answered that he/she does not agree with the way the fund is used (Q22d), probably because of the formulation of the question.

4.5 PARTICIPATION21

There are no provisions in the three constitutions related to the way the decisions have to be taken. In fact, the EC decides about the agenda of assemblies and presents it at their beginning. Users have the possibility of complementing it with their own requests. Decisions are taken by consensus or by majority. Almost all users think the assembly is the right place where decisions are to be taken.

19 The Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal (FECOFUN) is probably the most important NGO related to FUG.
20 with a precision +/- 10%
21 Sources: individual interviews, semi-structured interview and constitution
Three levels of participation in the DMP have been considered further:

- attendance to assemblies - presence at the DMP
- definition of problems - expression of interests
- taking decision - influence on the DMP

The results presented in this chapter come from the individual interviews. Because of their privileged positions in the DMP, EC members have been asked different questions than the users. The main focus of the questions was about difficulties the users could have while taking part in the DMP. However, the possibility considering the participation from a different angle has the disadvantage to form two groups: the users’ group with 24 people and the EC members’ one with 10 people. The pertinence of the results decreases with the decreasing number of people per group. Eight advantaged people out of twelve interviewed were EC members of their FUG at the time the study was carried out.

The assiduity of the users to attend to the two last assemblies seems to be lower in Budikhoiriya than in the two other FUG. No particular trend has been noticed considering the cultural groups. The main reason expressed not to attend an assembly was the work that had to be done. Only half of the users, of which most of the people are from Bhudha Bhimsen, remember an important decision taken during the last two assemblies. The majority of the users did not voice a request at the occasion of the two last assemblies. The main reason could be related to the ‘thulo maanche’ phenomenon. ‘Thulo maanche’ literally means ‘big persons’ and defines people who have an important position in the society. ‘Saano maanche’ (‘small persons’) is used for ordinary people.

Budikhoiriya FUG, where all decisions of the three last assemblies were taken by the EC, is astonishingly characterised by the largest proportion of users who expressed a request. This situation is exactly the opposite in Bhudha Bhimsen. This fact shows the limit actions of studying small groups.

Only one third of the users have the feeling that they are able to influence the decisions taken within their FUG. No disadvantaged person has this feeling. The reasons expressed are probably related to the ‘thulo maanche’ phenomenon, too. It is not the function of a ‘saano maanche’ to take an active part in the DMP from the point of view of such a person but of a ‘thulo maanche’.
5. SYNTHESIS OF THE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to answer the two research questions, i.e. the question about the perception of the forest and that of the factors that have an influence on the DMP.

Fig. 5.1 Overview of the elements judged significant in relation with the two main research questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phenomenon of woodland</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The forest perceived first of all as a resource.</td>
<td>Natural resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The forest made out of wooden plants.</td>
<td>CF and agroforestry as main sources of supply of firewood, timber and fodder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The forest made by men (ban banaune)</td>
<td>Generally low significance of the substitutes of forest products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposite between the forest mastered by men and the wild jungle (from the perspective of advantaged people)</td>
<td>CF condition not good enough to fully satisfy the users’ needs, but is improving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal meeting places</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(tea-shop, agricultural fields, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possibility of expressing oneself in a small group of people (more or less well know)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intermediaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>influential people (elder family members, 'thulo manche')</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capability to express oneself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>available time (e.g. job)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basic knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>literate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge of rights and duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge about the subject discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silvicultural operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(first opportunities at local level)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>which influence the participation at the individual level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of own role and the role of the others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>confusion between what the users could do and what they are able to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘thulo maanche’ phenomenon:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the ‘big men’ know better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the ‘big men’ do not listen to the ‘small men’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socioeconomic environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apart from an archaic agriculture and emigration, few opportunities of income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult access to road suitable for motor vehicles form Budikhoriya and Piple FUG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhudha Bhimsen and Budikhoriya FUG are characterised by a caste which represents two thirds of the HH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not more than 10% of the users get their SLC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>possibility given to the users of coming forward with a request</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>call the assembly and prepare its agenda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assemblies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All users have the right to attend assemblies ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... and to take an active part in the debates:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The EC presents the agenda, which can complemented by the users</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decisions are taken by consensus or majority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study of participation and its participants is not an easy one, since it takes place in the dynamics of a society and deals with heterogeneous groups (caste system, cohabitation of at least two religions, i.e. Hinduism and Buddhism) which have their particular context (e.g. access to a
road system, development of agroforestry, CF condition, meeting places). It is therefore obvious that the results of this study are not representative at the group level (very few people have been interviewed) and at the district level (only 3 FUG have been studied in two districts). However, the results point out factors that are likely to be significant for the participation in the DMP. The figure 5.1 presents an overview of the elements related to the two questions. It is divided into four zones, each of them characterised by a colour, respectively by a grey level. These zones are not clearly delimited in order to visualise their imbrication in a whole and their interactions. The first zone recapitulates the socio-economic environment of the three FUG. The second zone represents the subject of the DMP, i.e. the CF. Its significance for the users and the perception they have of it are the topic of chapter 5.1. The third zone encompasses the different meeting places and their function in the DMP. The last zone introduces the factors which influence the users’ participation in the DMP. Chapter 5.2 deals with the DMP while considering those factors likely to influence the users’ participation in that process.

5.1 Perception of the forest

The religious dimension of the forest seems to change, especially in Budikhoriya where the people went into the CF area to perform religious activities in the past, but no more now. CF and agroforestry, apparently well practised in the three FUG, complementary represent sources of supply of forest products. Rich people seem to be less dependent on the CF. Firewood, timber and fodder are the forest products the interviewed people think are the most significant. These three products seem not to have important substitutes, except chemical fertilisers in Bhudha Bhimsen. Most of the people want bigger quantities of these three products, especially the people of Bhudha Bhimsen FUG, where the demand is the highest (11/12). This FUG manages the CF which has the lowest potential to fulfil the users’ needs. On the other hand, this potential is probably the highest in Piple, where the demand is the lowest. Most of the interviewed people of this FUG said to have enough products. The lowest proportion of people arguing they adhered to their FUG to get more forest products is to be found in Piple, too. There is a logical relation between the level of the fulfilment of the users’ needs in forest products and the conditions of the forest. Most of the people have the feeling the CF condition are improving, i.e. they will get bigger quantities of forest products in the future.

The topic of the perception of the forest was by far the most difficult to speak about. Further, the school level seems to influence the diversity of the answers. Different explanations of the term ‘forest’ were given: first through the notion of resource and then through its constituents. Some people explained the term forest by describing how they planted it or formed it by silvicultural operations. Advantaged people mainly considered the forest (ban) as different from the jungle (jangal). While the forest seems to be a space mastered by man, the jungle appears to be a wild space which it is not only dangerous to enter, but also difficult to access because of its thickness. This opposition between a forest under control and a wild jungle should be studied further. The disadvantaged people’s perception of the forest management should be an interesting subject, too.

It is not surprising that the forest was described as a resource. For example, 80% of the people mentioned the possibility of getting more forest products as reason to adhere to a FUG.

22 Note that no frame encompasses the whole figure, since the author does not pretend to have assessed this completely.
5.2 Factors that have an influence on the participation in the DMP

The assembly has a privileged place in the political arena, since important and constituent decisions of a FUG are taken within its structures. The assembly session is also an occasion for all the users to meet. However, the decision making process is not limited to this institution. The executive committee, the second institution of the FUG, enforces the decisions taken by the assembly and accomplishes its duties (e.g. sanction of infractions or distribution of forest product on individual demand). Its functions in the DMP are to prepare the agenda of the assemblies and to conduct meetings. These functions are very important in the process of defining problems. Most of the questions on the participation in the DMP were formulated without explicitly mentioning the assembly or the executive committee, in order not only to study the formal part of this process, but also the informal one. The answers show that the informal part is not negligible in the process of defining problems.

The subject of this chapter is the DMP and the factors which have an influence on the participation of the users. Informal discussions in public locations are presented first, followed by those of the executive committee and finally those of the assembly.

a) Informal spaces of discussions
Gathering places like tea-shops or agricultural fields offer the users the possibility of communicating about the FUG activities. There are three tea-shops in Bhudha Bhimsen and only one, opened in the morning, in each of the two other FUG.
Two people mentioned first to speak about their requests in such locations before voicing them in an assembly. During informal discussions, it appeared that sensitive matters or subjects of dissatisfactions were addressed at such occasions.
These meeting places seem to encourage the formulation of problems and the opinion making.
Some users said that they are talking about their request or problem with an important person first (cf. the phenomenon of ‘thulo maanche’ explained further in this chapter) to get their support.

b) The executive committee
The users have the possibility to attend the meetings of the executive committee. The reasons to do so are manifold, as it could be the notification of a sanction or the interest to listen to the deliberations. The users have the possibility of submitting a request to the EC, which decides to include it in the agenda of an assembly or not.

c) The assembly
Each user, or more precisely each representative of an HH, has the right to attend the assemblies (I), to submit a request (II) and to take an active part in the deliberations and the decision making (III).

I) Attendance at the assemblies
The attendance at the assemblies is the highest in Bhudha Bhimsen and in Budikhoriya with about 75% of the HH that are represented. This percentage is only 45% in Piple. The lack of a quorum in the constitutions of Piple could be an explanation to this big difference. Also important is the fact, that not attending an assembly could be an aggravating circumstance while defining a sanction.
The outputs of the analysis of the ethnic and caste composition of the people who attended to three recent assemblies show that no cultural group is under or over-represented on these occasions.
The reasons mentioned not to attend an assembly were almost all linked with lack of time because of an intensive work load. Considering this, the fact that the assemblies last one day could be a problem for some people to attend them. Some of the household’s heads who did not take part in an assembly asked their wife or one of their children to go. The statistics about the attendance show that 20 to 40% of the people present at an assembly were women. The participation of women in the DMP has almost not been taken into account in this study (only one woman had been interviewed). It is certainly interesting to better assess their functions in a future study (e.g. is it only an attendance function, a reporting function or/and a decision function?).

II) Definition of problems, issues

All the interviewed people who submitted a request (9) have done so in an assembly meeting. All the decisions taken in Budikhoriya were submitted by the EC, as well as in Piple except one decision on a request to build a temple on the proposal of a local organisation. On the other hand, about one third of the decisions taken in Bhudha Bhimsen had been suggested by users. On the average, four decisions have been taken in Budikhoriya and Piple during the last three assembly meetings. This average amounts to 16 in Bhudha Bhimsen. The high attendance at the assemblies, the many informal meeting places and the high demand for forest products that characterise Bhudha Bhimsen FUG could explain the fact that more decisions are taken during its assembly meetings and that the users seem to be more active in the DMP.

Among the 24 interviewed people, around two thirds answered that they have not voiced a request. The main reason mentioned was the uselessness of doing. The uselessness is interpreted in chapter 4.6 through the ‘thulo maanche’ phenomenon, i.e. the fact that ordinary people rely on important people (‘thulo maanche’) for the formulation of issues to be spoken about. Some users complain that important people do not listen to them.

III) Decisions making

Less than one third of the interviewed people (7/24) answered that they were able to influence the decision making of their FUG. No disadvantaged people belonged to this category. The reasons mentioned were linked with the ‘thulo maanche’ phenomenon. This phenomenon is not only a key to understand the fact that some people have the feeling not to be able to influence the decision making, but could also be a key to understand the people’s perception of their role in their FUG, e.g. the role unimportant people have (‘saano maanche’).

It is also interesting to consider this incapability from the point of view of the ten interviewed EC members. Six answered no user has such difficulties and the users have the possibility to take an active part in the DMP. It seems that there is a lack of communication between the EC members and the users about this problem.

Another problem seems to be the lack of interest of the users to take an active part in the DMP. There is no question about this problem in the questionnaire, but two people mentioned it during the individual interviews. One EC member of Budikhoriya and a user of Bhudha Bhimsen complained about the fact that the users do not pay attention during an assembly meeting. The percentage of people (20–40%)\(^{23}\) who answered that they do not remember an important decision taken during the last two assemblies is remarkable.

The social event of an assembly could also be a reason for the users not to pay attention to the debates. Assembly meetings offer a possibility of meeting each other and of speaking not only about the CF.

The purports of the debates held during the assemblies certainly represent a key to interpret this lack of attention, too. The users have to be motivated to break into the politic arena which the assembly meeting is a part of. A motivation could be a new rule, a new decision that affects them.

\(^{23}\) Five people answered (Q16c) no important decision has been taken during the two last assemblies and five other answered they do not know (24 people were asked).
negatively (e.g. rising taxes) or positively (e.g. temple construction) as well as the purpose to change a rule in a way that favours their social position. The purports of a FUG are likely to be linked with the management of the CF, whose targets are first of all the conservation and the utilisation of the community forest. The realisation of these two targets requires to find an optimum between an exploitation likely to degrade the forest condition in the long run and no exploitation at all. This optimum can not only be defined in a scientific way, it is a political issue. The motivation to become a member of a FUG were mainly to get access to forest products and, in some extent, to protect the forest. The analysis of the social status of the interviewed people shows an interesting rift. The protection is the principal motivation of the advantaged people (9/12), while only few disadvantaged people mentioned it (2/9). Most of the advantaged people recognise also that the capacity of the forest is not sufficient to cover their needs of forest products (Q10e). The fact that almost all advantaged people (11/12) were or are members of a EC could explain their higher concern for the CF protection. As EC member, they probably feel more responsible for the protection and conservation of the CF, which is a legal condition to maintain the right to manage their forest (the government has not handed over the propriety right)\textsuperscript{24}. Because of their formal (EC member) and informal (‘\textit{thulo maanche}’) position, they are likely to impose the protection of the CF on the rest of the group.

The access to forest products was the main motivation mentioned to adhere to a FUG. The harvesting and distribution of firewood and timber are potential major issues, especially for the disadvantaged people who strongly rely on them. However, the harvesting and distribution patterns are clearly defined and are not likely to change. Firewood is collected during silvicultural operations in which every user can take part and timber can be harvested on individual demand. Even if the quantities from the CF are not enough to fully satisfy the needs of the group members, the users accept it either because of the limited capacities of the CF or due to the fact that all users have equal entitlements.

An other major issue could be the utilisation of the financial fund (amount quite high between 60’000-85’000 NRs). Nevertheless, no one answered not to agree with the current utilisation of the fund. The disadvantaged people are hardly aware of their fund (name of the treasurer, amount and the way it is used). These people could take advantage of it, for example, by reducing the fees they have to pay for the forest products.

6. CONCLUSION

The participation in the DMP allows the users to express themselves and to reflect the diversity of their interests about the CF management. The participation also allows the users to influence the decisions taken by the FUG, i.e. to practise democracy directly, to experience it. The constitutional set-up for the participation of all users in the DMP seems to be known by all interviewed people, some users, especially disadvantaged people, still have difficulties to enact it. The difficulties are probably linked with (a) a lack of basic knowledge (illiterate), (b) little awareness of constitutional rights and duties, (c) a lack of knowledge about the subjects that are debated (e.g. fund, management of the forest), and (d) a lack of experiences with participation in DMP. The recent democratisation process that takes place in Nepal mainly, if not only, at a national level, could explain this point (d). The users are probably still used to that the decisions are taken by the important people, i.e. the ‘\textit{thulo maanche}’, and that their opinion, the opinion of the ‘\textit{saano maanche}’, is not necessarily taken into account.

\textsuperscript{24} “During (the) Fiscal Year [1999] an important political decision for the Community Forestry Program has been the amendment of the Forest Act (Forest Act, 1999). ... (T)his Act allows the District Forest Office to take action directly against the FUGs or member of the FUG and punish them if they have done something in transgression to the constitution and the Operational Plan of the FUG.” NSCFP, 1999, p. 4
Therefore, the users should not only get the opportunity to obtain the necessary knowledge and skills to take an active part in the DMP, but their perception of their place in their FUG should also evolve from their status and transcend into a status of memberships.

7. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are not concrete measures to increase the level of participation of the FUG members, but focus on particular issues that should be studied further for a better understanding of the participation process and its participants:

- Change of the perception of the forest induced by the formation of a FUG, especially by the elaboration of an operational plan which organises the forest management
- Knowledge the users have about
  - their rights and duties in their FUG
  - the way the CF is managed (silviculture, plan)
- Users’ perception of their own place within their FUG (c.f. ‘thulo maanche’)
- Patterns of participation, especially the consensus, and their implications
  The consensus probably does not encourage the “silent“ people to express themselves.
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ANNEXE 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOCUS INTERVIEWS WITH MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Area of the Community Forest (CF) in ha:
Number of members of the FUG:
Number of HH belonging to the FUG:
Ethnic/caste composition
Number of HH belonging to the disadvantaged groups
Number of FUG within the VDC
Income Generating Activities (IGA) within the VDC
What is the role of the assembly ?
What is the role of the executive committee (EC) ?
What is the role of the EC related to the assembly ?
What are the provisions to make it possible the users to raise issues ?
How many members form the EC ?
When was the last election of the EC held?
How have the members of the EC been elected ?
Who elected the members of the EC ?
How many people of the lower castes (Dam, Kam, Sar) are members in the EC ?
How many women are members in the EC ?
How often the EC is called together ?
How are the topics of the agenda set normally?
Who is responsible of the agenda ?
In your opinion what are the five main topics discussed in the meetings of the EC during the last twelve months ?
How long are the meetings ?
How does the EC generally take decisions ?
Art there any written rules related to the way the decisions should be taken in the EC ?
What are these rules ?
Have these rules changed since the formation of the FUG ?
How many times per year is the assembly called together ?
How are the topics of the agenda set normally?
Who is responsible for the agenda ?
Who proposes generally the agenda in the assemblies ?
What are the five main topics discussed in the last two assemblies ?
How long are the assemblies ?
How does the assembly generally take decisions ?
Art there any written rules related to the way the decisions should be taken in the assembly ?
What are these rules ?
Have these rules changed since the formation of the FUG?

Was the access to forest products within the actual boundaries of your CF limited prior to the formation of the FUG?

If yes: what kind of forest products?

When was your CF handed over?

Who initiated the process of formation of your FUG?

Who supported you during the process of formation of your FUG?

What were the criteria to select the members?

Any problems during the formation, for example (a) people who tried to become a member and were not accepted or (b) problems related with boundaries?

Have you accepted new members since the formation of your FUG?

If yes: what were the conditions to become a new member of your FUG?

What are the forest products harvested from the CF?

What are the forest products that are not allowed to be harvested?

What are the rules related to the harvesting of forest products?

What are the rules related to the distribution of forest products?

What are the conditions for the users to harvest forest products (e.g. fee, provision work, etc.)?

If any, what are the provisioned rules and who has to participate?

If any, what are the forest products they harvest to sell and who decides about that?

Is an increase of the harvested quantities possible without degrading your CF in the long run?

What are the conditions that have to be considered while increasing the harvested quantities?

Is there any provision for a specific group to be granted with a particular forest product?

What are the forest products and who is entitled to use them?

What are these special rules?

Who is responsible to check if the rules are applied or not?

Have users members already been sanctioned by the FUG?

For which reasons were they sanctioned?

Has any of them broken the same rule two times?

If any, what were the sanctions for the second time?

Who decides generally to sanction somebody?

Are there any conflicts within your FUG? If yes: what are they?

Are there outsiders who harvest forest products in your CF?

If yes, what are the forest products they collect?

If any, have these people the possibility to take an active part in the decision making related to them? if yes, how?

Are there any religious areas or religious forest within the boundaries of your CF?

If any, who is responsible for the harvesting of forest products within these areas?

Relation with the DFO and NSCFP?

Reason of the attendance of users in the meeting of the EC?

Who raised the issues written in the minutes book?

Who are the representatives of the HH in the assemblies?
ANNEXE 2

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

ID: _____
Date (d/m/y): __ / __ / __
Investigated FUG: ____________________
Interviewers: ____________________
____________________
Duration (approximately): __ h __ min
Presence of people other
than the interviewed person
(without considering children): □ yes □ no
Reasons: ____________________

1a. When did you and your family become a user of your FUG ?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

2a. Who decided your family should enter the process of becoming a user of your FUG ?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If own choice:
2b. For which reasons have you decided to become a user of your FUG ?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If not own choice:
2c. What did you think about this decision ?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

2d. Why did you think like this ?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

3a. Did you or your family ever encounter difficulties or obstacles to join the FUG ?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply
If yes:
3b. Which difficulties or obstacles did you or your family encounter?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

4a. Have you actually any official position in your FUG?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

4b. Which official position do you have in your FUG?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

The person and the community forest

5a. Do you have a different feeling about your community forest since you joined your FUG?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If yes:
5b. What kind of different feeling do you have?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

6a. Do you practise any religious ceremonies in your community forest?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If yes:
6b. Which kind of religious ceremonies do you practise in your community forest?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

7a. What are the forest products that are important to you (you need)?
7b. Ranking (number) in the 2nd column of the table below.
7c. Put a star in the 3rd column if the person mentioned the forest product before the interviewer ask further indepth for other forest products (e.g. grazing, NTFP).
8a. Source of supply (ranking, number, if no collection in the CF, please tick it with a „x“)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forest products</th>
<th>Q7</th>
<th>Own private land</th>
<th>Private land of others</th>
<th>CF</th>
<th>Other CF</th>
<th>Other forests</th>
<th>Purchased (ready made)</th>
<th>Other, specify:</th>
<th>Q10</th>
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Trend: +: more   -: less   =: remaining the same   x: not available   ? do not know; CF for Community forest

Remarks considering the matrix (e.g. special cases)

9a. Ranking of the main source of energy for cooking and heating

___ fuelwood ___ Jhikra\textsuperscript{25} ___ crop residues ___ kerosene ___ cattle dung
___ other: _______________

☐ do not know ☐ do not answer the question ☐ explanation was necessary ☐ no reply

9b. Ranking of the main fertilizers

___ natural compost ___ chemical fertilizers ___ other: _______________

☐ do not know ☐ do not answer the question ☐ explanation was necessary ☐ no reply

10a. (While considering the matrix …) Do you have the feeling you should get more forest products than you are getting now from your community forest ?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ do not know ☐ do not answer the question ☐ explanation was necessary ☐ no reply

If no:
10b. Why do you have the feeling you should not get more forest products from your community forest ?

☐ do not know ☐ do not answer the question ☐ explanation was necessary ☐ no reply

If yes:
10c. What are the forest products you should get more from your community forest ?
Mark them in the last column of the table (column „Q10“)

\textsuperscript{25} Fodder residues
10d. Why (do you have the feeling you should get more forest products from your community forest) ?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

10e. Why do you think your FUG does not allowed you to get more forest products from your community forest ?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

10f. What do you think about these reasons ? (ask further why if the person answer e.g. „good“, „bad“)

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

11a26. Do you take part, you and your family, in any forest activities of your FUG ?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If yes:
11b. In which forest activities have you and your family taken part the last twelve months ?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

11c. How many days per year does you and your family have to perform forest activities (1 days work is related to the work of one person) ?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

11d. Do you have the feeling you and your family have to work too much for the community forest ?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

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26 new question added, therefore the number of the question is the same of the question about the role of the executive committee (incoherence kept because of the Nepali version of the questionnaire which is difficult to modify)
11e. Why do you have this feeling?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

12a. Do you have the feeling the forest products that you get from the community forest are expensive?

☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

12b. Why do you have this feeling?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

Participation in the decision making of the FUG: Questions to the users only (see question #4)

13a. In your opinion, why is the executive committee necessary?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

14a. Have you ever raised an issue within your FUG?

☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If no:

14b. Why have you never raised an issue within your FUG?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If yes:

14c. How do you raise an issue within your FUG?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply
14d. What are the issues you raised the last two years (2055/56)?
Facilitator has to write the issues on a flash card …

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

14e. In your opinion, which of these issues have not been taken into account seriously?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

14f. Why do you have the feeling these issues were not taken into account seriously?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

15a. How are the decisions taken in your FUG?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

15b. Do you have the feeling, you are able to influence decisions in your FUG?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If no:
15c. Why do you have the feeling you are not able to influence decision in your FUG?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If yes:
15d. How do you influence decisions in your FUG?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

15e. Do you have the feeling, there are decisions you are not able to influence?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

15f. What are the decisions that you are not able to influence?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

16a. Have you attended to the two last assembly meetings of your FUG held on …?
If the person did not attended to both assemblies:
16b. Why have you not attended to the two assemblies?

If the person attended at least to one assembly:
16c. What were the issues discussed that were important to you?

16d. What were the issues important to you that were not discussed?

Participation considered by the committee members

17a. In your opinion, what are the targets of your FUG?

18a. What are the possibilities given to the users to take an active part in the decision making?

18b. Do you think there are actually users that have difficulties to take an active part in the decision making of your FUG?

If no:
18c. For which reasons you think nobody has such difficulties?

If yes:
18d. Who are the users who have difficulties to take an active part in the decision making of your FUG?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

18e. What kinds of difficulties have these users to take an active part in the decision making?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

19a. What do you want to change that the users who have such difficulties take an active part in the decision making of your FUG?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If no proposition:
19b. For which reasons you do not want to change anything?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

20a. In your opinion are there any users with unsatisfied needs?

☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If yes:
20b. Who are the users with unsatisfied needs?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

20c. For which reasons you think these needs remain unsatisfied?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply
For users and committee members

21a. Do you have the feeling your community forest is generally enough protected against misuse from outsiders of the FUG?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

21b. Do you have the feeling your community forest is generally enough protected against misuse from insiders of the FUG?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

22a. How much money do you estimate is actually in the fund of your FUG?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

22b. What were in your opinion the three main expenditures of your FUG of the last fiscal year?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

22c. Could you tell me the name of the person responsible for the fund?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

22d. Do you generally agree with the way the fund is used?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

Outlook

23a. In your opinion, are there any dangers or problems that could threaten the FUG?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If no:
23b. Why do you think no danger nor problem could threaten your FUG? (if the question is difficult, ask about the strength of the FUG …)

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If yes:
23c. Which dangers or problems could threaten your FUG?
24a. Splitting of the column „community forest“ of the matrix in three column (past, present and future) and asking about trend (please notice it with the following symbols in the table: +: more, -: less, =: remaining the same, x: not available, ? do not know)

24b. (While considering the three most important forest products to the person …)
Why do you think it will be possible for you to harvest more / less of the main forest products?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

Perception of the forest

25a. Please imagine you should explain what is a forest to somebody who has never seen a forest (ban), for example to somebody from Katmandu or Tibet. How would you explain this?
☐ If too difficult: explanation to a blind person or ask the person to close her eyes and to describe the forest after imagining it.

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

25b. Are there any differences between „ban“ and „janghal“?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply
If yes:
25c. What are the differences between „ban“ and „janghal“?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

25d. Do you go alone to the „ban“?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

25e. Do you go alone to the „janghal“?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply
If no (either ban or janghal or both):
25f. Why do you not go alone to the ban/janghal?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

25g. What makes a tree different from a shrub?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply
Social-cultural profile

26a. How old are you?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

27a. Which school level have you completed?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

28a. What is your main occupation?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

29a. How many ropanis of private land do you own?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

29b. How many cows and buffalo do you own?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

30a. Have you been a member of the executive committee before?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If yes:
30b. What was your official position at that time?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

Question to the committee members only:
30c. For how many years have you been member of the executive committee?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

31a. Apart from your FUG, do you have any official position in your village?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

If yes:
31b. In what organization(s) do you have an official position?
☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

31c. Which official position do you have in this (these) organization(s)?

☐ do not know  ☐ do not answer the question  ☐ explanation was necessary  ☐ no reply

32a. ☐ Female / ☐ Male

33a. Caste / Ethnic group:
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Participants and Participation in the Management of Natural Resources within Forest Users' Groups (FUG). A Social-Cultural Study in the Middle Hills of two Districts of Nepal (38 pages)

01/1  Schmithüsen Franz/Wild-Eck Stephan
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Tendances du droit forestier: Europe Occidentale (37 pages)

00/3  Seeland Klaus/Schmithüsen Franz
Forest Use and Management in the Wider Himalayan Context, Selected Papers (39 pages)

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Percevoir la forêt et la gestion forestière (33 pages)

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Trends in Forestry Legislation: Western Europe (35 pages)
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