

**Report on
Two-days Training for Community Forest leaders with Knowledge-Based
Exposure Visit**

Submitted by

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Date: 2082-09-14

Field location: Amritdhara CF

Field Exposure:

On the last day of the program, 2082-09-14, a field exposure visit was organized to help participants see how the leasehold provision within Community Forest land is actually being practiced on the ground. To ensure that as many participants as possible could join, the visit was conducted continuously without dividing the group. Two community sites were selected for the visit: "**People's Park Samuha**" and "**Aayearjan Samuha**", both managed by groups of women using small areas of Community Forest land.

When we reached the field, the local community warmly welcomed us with tika and flowers, which created a very positive and friendly atmosphere. We were then guided to a seating area arranged by the community. Mr. Lekh Bahadur Kharel, Secretary of Amritdhara Community Forest, greeted us and shared their journey. Then, Chairperson of Amritdhara CF, Mr. Megh Bahadur Kahdka explained how the Community



Figure 1: Field visit to Chitwan District

Forest first learned about the leasehold provision, how they discussed it within their user group, and how they finally decided to allocate a small portion of forest land to women's groups. He particularly highlighted that women from the community were actively involved in managing and utilizing this land, which made the initiative more meaningful and sustainable.

Our first stop was **People's Park Samuha**. Here, a group of women has been managing a park area inside the Community Forest. They have developed it as a recreational space where visitors can come and relax by paying a small entry fee. This has become a regular source of income for the group. They have also planted many fruit trees in the area. Once these trees start bearing fruit, the group plans to sell them in the local market to generate additional income. We had a short

knowledge sharing session with the women, where they openly shared their experiences, challenges, and achievements. Then the groups shared that despite their efforts in managing and tending the leased patch of Community Forest land, they have been facing few challenges. In the case of **People's Park Samuha**, one of the major problems has been damage caused by monkeys. The monkeys frequently destroy the fruits when they are ripe, often before the group can harvest them for sale.

This has significantly affected their ability to generate income from the fruit trees. The group explained that they have tried various methods to reduce the monkey attacks, but so far these efforts have not been successful. However, they emphasized that they are not discouraged by this setback and remain committed to finding a solution and continuing their work in the park. After that, they took us around the park and showed how they manage and maintain the area.



Figure 2: People's Park, Amritdhara C.F

We then went to another nearby site managed by **Aayearjan Samuha**. This group has also been using a leased area within the Community Forest. They have planted different types of fruit trees and have been regularly taking care of them. We visited the site directly, where the women showed us their plantations and explained how they work together to tend to the trees. Their dedication and teamwork were clearly visible in the way they have



Figure 3: Visiting Aayearjan Samuha

maintained the land. But they have shared that they have been struggling with the spread of invasive plant species. These invasive plants have damaged and killed many young fruit saplings despite the group's continuous efforts to remove them. Although they have repeatedly tried to control the invasive species, the plants keep spreading and affecting their plantation. The group expressed their concern over this issue and requested support from WRRN or any other relevant organization that could help them address the problem effectively. Nevertheless, they firmly stated that they will not give up and will continue managing and caring for the land allocated to them by the Community Forest.

Overall, the field visit was very inspiring for all participants. Seeing real examples of women successfully using leasehold forest land helped everyone better understand the provision in a practical way. Many participants expressed that the visit motivated them to consider similar initiatives in their own Community Forests. The experience showed that when women are given opportunities, support, and space to work, they can effectively use forest resources to improve their livelihoods while also protecting the environment.

As the field visit was coming to an end, Ms. Aarati Pathak delivered a short speech of appreciation. She expressed her sincere gratitude to the Amritdhara Community Forest for their proactive efforts in utilizing the leasehold provision to support their community, particularly women and marginalized groups. She also thanked the members of People's Park Samuha and Aayearjan Samuha for their dedication and excellent work in managing their respective sites, noting that their initiatives serve as strong examples of community leadership and women's empowerment. She concluded her remarks by encouraging all participants to take inspiration from these practices and consider initiating similar efforts within their own Community Forest User Groups.

Annex 2: Photo Plates



