

Report on Issue based discussion of community forest with CF Executive members of Piple Pokhara Community Forest User Group (CFUG)



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ABBREVIATIONS

CF	Community Forest
CFUG	Community Forest User Group
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forest Users of Nepal
RBA	Right Based Advocacy
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WRRN	Women Rights and Resources Network



On 30th of August, 2024, the team of Women Rights and Resource Network (WRRN) with financial support of United Nations Development Program (UNDP) conducted an event in Piple Pokhara Community Forest User Group (CFUG). The major motive of gathering was to identify the issues of community forest with CF executive members.

PARTICIPATION

The team of WRRN included Chairperson of organization Ms. Aarati Pathak, Program Officer Mrs. Kabita Gaire and Forestry Associate of WRRN Ms. Pratikshaya Bhandari were present in the program. The special guest of the program was the Honorable member of Bagmati Province Ms. Bharati Pathak.

From CFUG and WRRN team, there were around 34 participants including Chairperson of the group Mr. Ram Hari Chaulagain, Treasurer Mrs. Rita Acharya, Vice-Secretariate Mr. Jhalak Bhujel, Chairperson of women led enterprise group Mrs. Bishnu Kumar Rai, Treasurer of enterprise group Mrs. Radhika Shrestha, Secretariate Mrs. Saraswati Koirala along with other members of executive committee and enterprise groups were present in the event.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

The program was started with a brief introduction from all participants. Following this, attendees were familiarized with the initiatives of WRRN and UNDP, along with a project overview. Mrs. Kabita Gaire elaborated on the project's objectives and its key focus areas within the Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs).

During the prior visit to CFs, they were asked to explain about the key issues and challenges faced by the CFUG for proper functioning and regularized functioning of CF. During the visit for issue-based discussion, the participants were explained about the areas of concern that will be focused by the team of WRRN in future days for the preparation of Right Based Advocacy (RBA) plan. Along with this, the participants were asked to explain about the issues and some of the key issues were identified and noted down. The issues discussed during the event are enlisted below:

- Encroachment of forest area
- Shortage of raw materials due to management rules of CF
- Provision of triple taxation system
- Rules and regulations barrier for community registration for enterprise establishment
- Documentation of policy enabling condition for strengthening community forest's resource management.
- Lack of capacity building trainings regarding financial management.
- Changing rules and regulations at national and provincial level acting as a barrier for sustainable forest management.
- Forest fire and lack of safety equipment during such disasters.
- Lack of capacity building trainings regarding forest management.
- Decreasing interest of CFUG members due to less dependency upon forest for their livelihood.

After discussing various issues, Ms. Bharati Pathak expressed her happiness for the gradual success of the Piple Pokhara CFUG in implementing effective forest management techniques, empowering women, and achieving financial stability. Since the establishment of CF and the enterprise group of Piple Pokhara, she has been acting as a witness for its success and was very happy to see how Shramjeevi Mahila Kasta Hastakala Udhyog (श्रमजीवी महिला काष्ठ हस्तकला उद्योग) is growing its market to local and national level. Along with the happiness, she expressed her sorrow for the encroachment of forest area and decrease of CFUG member's interest towards their CF due to less dependency on forest. Ms. Aarati Pathak, at last shared about her happiness helping the respective CF in every aspect for its sustainable running and expressed her feeling of how much she was pleased with the ongoing improvements and praised all members of the CFUG members and enterprise group for their strong bonding.

CONCLUSION

In this way, the event of issue-based discussion was successfully completed with the active participation of all group members and discussion about almost every issue that are prevalent in the CF since long period of time.

PHOTO PLATES

