

Forest Governance and Community Forestry Development Project in Nepal

Phase I, March 2003-August 2004

Evaluation Report August 2004



A women FECOFUN member explaining the changes in governance characteristics looking at the governance poster.

By Marilyn Hoskins and Dhruba Acharya

TABLE OF CONTENT

Abbreviations

Executive Summary

1. Background

- 1.1 Context of Project Formulation
- 1.2 Purpose of the evaluation
- 1.3 Evaluation process and methodology
- 1.4 Limitations of the evaluation

2. Findings from the evaluation

- 2.1 Project relevance in relation to CF issues
- 2.2 Project Achievements
- 2.3 Effectiveness, efficiency and organizational arrangements
- 2.4 Management and relevance of expenditures

3. Issues and constraints

- 3.1 Issues of project formulation and implementation
- 3.2 Project's transparency
- 3.3 Sharing among other CF project
- 3.4 Fear of program closure
- 3.5 Reaching more FUGs for the change process
- 3.6 Need for GFG training to all FUG committee members
- 3.7 Encouragement to women leadership
- 3.8 More transparent process of selecting facilitators and coordinator is needed
- 3.9 Facilitators needing more skills and incentives
- 3.10 More communication between central and district FECOFUN
- 3.11 A clear guideline for expenditure of the fund and roles of participants

4. Options and Recommendations

Annex 1: Achievements made in each Project goals and objectives

Annex 2: Activities carried out in each objective

Annex- 3: Documents consulted

Annex 4: Budget Status as of 30th June 2004 and estimated budget till Aug04

Annex-5: Persons and organizations consulted /visited

Abbreviations

CBO	Community Based Organization
CF	Community Forestry
COFSUN	Community Forestry Supporters Network
DDC	District Development Committees
DFO	District Forest Officer
DoF	Department of Forests
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forestry User Groups
FTPP	Forests, Trees and People Program
FUG	forests user group
GFG	Good Forest Governance
IoF	Institute of Forestry
MoFSC	Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
OP	Operational Plan
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Center
SDC	Swiss Development Corporation
VDC	Village Development Committee
WATCH	Women Acting Together for Change
WSSD	World Summit for Sustainable Development

Table of Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Abbreviations	iv
Executive summary	v
Background	1
Context of project formulation	1
Purpose of evaluation	2
Evaluation process and methodology	2
Limitations of the evaluation	3
Findings from the evaluation	3
Project relevance in relation to CF issues	3
Project achievements	4
Effectiveness, efficiency and organizational arrangements	5
Management and relevance of expenditures	7
Issues and constraints	7
Issues of project formulation and implementation	7
Project's transparency	8
Sharing among other CF projects	8
Fear of program closure	9
Reaching more FUGs for the change process	9
Need for GFC training to all FUG committee members	9
Encouragement to women leaders	9
A more transparent process of selecting facilitators and coordinator is needed	10
FECOFUN facilitators need more skills and incentives	10
More communication between Central and District FECOFUNs	10
A clear guideline for expenditure of the fund and roles of participants	10
Options and recommendations	10
Annexes	14
Annex 1: Achievements made in each project goals and objectives	14
Annex 2: Activities carried out in each objective	20
Annex 3: Documents consulted	23
Annex 4: Budget status as of 30 th June 2004 and estimated budget till August 2004	25
Annex 5: Persons and organizations consulted/visited	26

Abbreviations

CB NRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CBO	Community Based Organization
CF	Community Forestry
CFUG	Community Forest User Group
COFSUN	Community Forestry Supporters Network
DDC	District Development Committees
DFO	District Forest Officer
DoF	Department of Forests
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forestry User Groups in Nepal
FTPP	Forests, Trees and People Program
FUG	Forest User Group
GFG	Good Forest Governance
IoF	Institute of Forestry
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoFSC	Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation
NARMSAP	Natural Resource Management Support Assistance Program
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
OP	Operational Plan
PSC	Project Support Committee
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific
SDC	Swiss Development Corporation
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
VDC	Village Development Committee
WATCH	Women Acting Together for Change
WSSD	World Summit for Sustainable Development

Executive summary

The team found that the current phase of Forest Governance and Community Forestry Development Project in Nepal has been successful in most ways and it is providing an extremely important service to communities and to the sustainability of community forestry activities in Nepal. The most disappointing aspect was that the MoFSC was not more closely involved and that the project document was not clear enough on such things as roles of the various actors. We believe that the project should continue as a program with a broader participation of partners in Nepal both in the design and the implementation and with a mechanism for exchanging ideas between projects and others involved in community forestry and in forest governance.

The evaluation team observed the following:

1. **The need for improving governance in community forestry is very relevant to the current situation in Nepal.** It was a major theme in the recent 4th National Community Forestry Workshop in Nepal. After reviewing research studies of the good governance issues in Nepal (described further in this document) the team finds the project's design and execution address these issues extremely well. The project also addresses the transversal themes of SDC--governance, social equity and poverty reduction.
2. **The project does not have smooth relations with the national level government in that the MoFSC has reported frustration that they were not officially more involved in its design and activities** (although a number of forestry officials were unofficially involved. Whether MoFSC would have formally approved the project, given the political situation at the time when the project was being designed, is another question. The Secretary of Forestry left his post during this evaluation and a new Secretary could mean a new openness to community forestry and to working with WATCH. Many people feel relations are warming between forestry officials and WATCH staff after collaboration on the 4th Community Forestry Workshop. The previous lack of support from the government level does not seem to have affected the project activities in the field. One of the officials of the DoF showed an openness to change on the most contentious point of this project as he encouraged SDC to fund some activities directly with civil society giving them the responsibility of managing the project.
3. The team found a **high level of effectiveness and efficiency** in the project at the village and district levels and in its impact, especially on the disadvantaged. We were very impressed by the unique training and self assessment methods which evolved during this project, by the development of local facilitators and by the increased understanding of good governance local people and their organizations experienced due to this project. Although there are other programs with related interests, this program actually changes the roles people play and encourages equity and governance at a very basic level. Members of these organizations told of new ways they see the environment and their rights and responsibilities for both the resource and each other after training. Women and members of lower castes had become active for the first time, held offices and appeared self assured within the FUG and FECOFUN groups. In the majority of both the District FECOFUNs and the local FUGs, we saw both men and women coming from different castes in leadership positions and in other groups such changes were scheduled. We saw enthusiasm even from disadvantaged low caste groups managing very small forest plots. A number of FUGs are starting to focus on increasing returns; some have planted broom grass, fruit and timber trees and other forest products, one group is making a very popular drink from forest fruit and another has a small saw mill. The project has contributed young fish to communities to add economic return from their fish ponds. There is an increasing focus by FUGs on improving conditions of disadvantaged community members through special measures. Some FUGs, however, are still using their income for creating buildings or other outputs that do not help the poor. These initiatives show the importance of first improving equity and then increasing benefits.
4. **The goals and objectives of the project were overly ambitious** especially for a year and a half project. Forming a development support committee with the government and working with village and district governments, which are now defunct, did not materialize. **However, activities were cost effective and**

the impact of this small project in the rural areas and its outputs were even more than expected. (See Annex I). The financial arrangement, to FUG members, is becoming more transparent through public audits. The financial management of the overall project funds, including accounting, is quite sound with a formal external audit.

5. **The team feels that FUGs and FECOFUN are extremely important to the future of Nepal and CF has been cited as being an entry point for other development.** FUGs are local democratically operating organizations which are important to natural resource management. The federation, FECOFUN, is democratically elected by FUG members and it supports the future by making members more powerful as they work with other advocacy groups. There are currently internal issues within FECOFUN Central which we could not fully identify but may relate to an election of officers happening in two years. Some FECOFUN officers stated that they could run projects directly without the oversight of WATCH. The evaluation team felt that Central FECOFUN did not, at this moment, have the independent organizational capacity or professional skills for managing the training and other aspects of this kind of program. It is quite promising, however, after their election and with appropriate technical and professional support, for them to reach that level of skill at the end of a three year project.
6. **The team was requested to pay special attention to the organizational structure for a follow up phase.** These options were vetted at the Nepali debriefing held at SDC with forestry officials, NGOs, and members of FECOFUN and WATCH. This group was very interested in discussing the future and many of their ideas have been considered. Any of these could be a continuation of the present program even if it changed organizational arrangements. Four possibilities for are sketched out in the report. In the first three scenarios the team has mentioned possible constraints. The team suggests the forth is the most promising.
 - ? **RECOFTC working directly with a national project** adding new NGOs and other partners to those already working with the project. The constraint is that focusing only on Nepal would lose the comparative advantage of RECOFTC of its regional reach
 - ? Expanding the current program but **work through new NGOs** with specific identified specialties, **instead of WATCH.** The team felt that it is good to add new NGOs but it was important to keep WATCH, at least for the good governance and legal awareness training and strengthening of District FECOFUNs and FUGs. To change the programming would disrupt processes which have been started and thereby greatly diminish the impact of the future program.
 - ? **Not including RECOFTC and working directly as a national program.** The team noted this approach would lose the advantage of regional sharing as well as training opportunities such as those given to the Institute of Forestry.
 - ? The choice preferred by the team is similar to the approach initially attempted by the present project including **more participation of MoFSC and other partners but with a project document which has clearer roles and fiscal arrangements.** It would be a two pronged approach with a Project Support Committee (PSC) including a range of interested groups as participants, such as representatives from MoFSC, RECOFTC, IoF, FUGs, FECOFUN, NGOs, CBOs, relevant projects and the private sector sharing experiences and ideas in both prongs.

In the first prong this body could function to include members from the region. RECOFTC would provide a neutral platform for an Asian exchange of experiences as well as providing educational expertise and opportunities, to the IoF and others. The PSC could also discuss issues important to good governance and roles of various groups including the DoFs. This project could be one of the cases discussed. The forum could also stimulate intellectual thinking on the underlying conceptual and policy issues related to forestry's role in addressing equity and poverty. RECOFTC, as a respected neutral organization could also play a convening role bringing parties together.

The second prong would focus on civil society, strengthening FECOFUN and expanding training and applied experience for trainers from FECOFUN and FUGs with professional support from WATCH and other experienced NGOs. NGOs could form a consortium from which specific expertise could be drawn when requested by the FUGs or FECOFUN. WATCH would continue to carry out the training component and other NGOs could provide specialties or technical skills such as introducing NTFPs and simplifying operational plans for forest management or could strengthen management skills in Central FECOFUN. This project would be one among many in Nepal in a forum for sharing project experience. The expected result would be FECOFUN able to manage projects and an increasing exchange of information and collaboration between field projects, NGOs and consultants. The use of trained facilitators to train others would result in an ever expanding coverage to FUGs in more districts by a growing number of professional local facilitators and community exchanges.

Forest Governance and Community Forestry Development Project in Nepal: Phase 1, March 2003-August 2004

Evaluation Report August 2004

Background

Context of project formulation

Nepal has long been in the center of regional and international interest for its community forestry development. The policies which allow communities to form forest user groups (FUGs) and manage specific areas of forest land for their own benefit are far ahead of most countries. The progressive forest policy and the role played by people from government and civil society, such as WATCH, was to help community groups learn of this new opportunity and gain access and skills to manage community forests. WATCH also supported the formation of a Federation of Community Forestry User Groups (FECOFUN), resulting in the user groups gaining more national and international recognition. Various policy changes have diminished the power of users to access land or have raised taxes on forest products from community forests without consulting local people. In these cases FECOFUN, along with an advocacy group called Natural Resources and Environment Concerned Group, among others, have been instrumental in advocacy and influencing the government.

Collaboration between the Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC) through the Forests, Trees and People Program (FTPP) was supported by Swiss funding for a number of years. During that time, the NGO Women Acting Together for Change (WATCH) was the focal point for these program activities in Nepal. As the FTPP was phased out, ongoing collaboration between the donor, RECOFTC and WATCH was seen as positive.

Discussions for developing a project began in a regional RECOFTC meeting in March 2001 where people from across the region discussed regional issues for community forestry and then had planning groups by country. The Nepal group included members of DoF, WATCH, FECOFUN and SDC. A document was “finalized” in an October 2001 drafting meeting. This project focused on the recognition of the importance of strengthening FUGs and FECOFUN. The idea was to formulate a program funded by the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC) with implementation by RECOFTC and WATCH. There was a delay in the project document finalization for several reasons, including that SDC and others wanted the Nepalese Department of Forests (DoF) as a key actor. There was a long period of unofficial discussions about this project with some DoF officials, but in the end the project could not get support from Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC).

Another concern was about the ability of the project to work in rural areas due to political unrest. The project document was described as finally “hastily completed” and submitted to the government through the Social Welfare Council, which approves or disapproves all NGO and CBO activities. This Council approved the project for implementation with the starting date of March 2003. The length and budget were cut from the original three year project proposal to one and a half years, during which time the above issues were to be explored before a longer project would be designed, if the results indicated. Although the time and the funding were reduced, the activities in the log frame were not. They were scheduled to be modified in October 2003 but the process was delayed until February 2004, six months before the end of the project.

Purpose of the evaluation

It is unusual to have a project evaluation when the project has run only a year and a half and has been fully functioning for only one year. This is especially true when the project has such optimistic and far reaching goals and objectives and is being carried out within a complex organizational arrangement. However, the project was a preliminary phase scheduled to end in August 2004. This phase was to explore and initiate collaborative activities involving all stakeholders in defining and developing future priorities and strategies. As far as possible the project was to introduce discussions in a number of districts and develop methods to improve governance of stakeholders from village to national level.

Besides the usual questions of context, relevance, efficiency and cost effectiveness, this evaluation was to specifically examine the range of partners and their organizational relations. Since the focus of the project was on initiating training and developing training methods to strengthen good governance, the evaluation looked at such issues as whether the right people are being trained and if the methods are effective. Since there are other groups addressing the issue of governance, the specific part played by this project was considered.

The evaluators have tried to bring together a balanced picture of the various perspectives and versions of what has happened or is happening. A number of these perspectives are in direct conflict. We analyzed the roles of the various agencies and organizations involved and studied the potential of others to become involved. We collected evidence from what we could observe and what we learned from discussions in different forestry offices, FECOFUN at national and district levels, WATCH, FUGs and with other projects and persons involved in community forestry. (See the list in Annex 5.) In this report we tried to bring a balanced picture of successes and remaining issues and also to present some options for the future.

Evaluation process and methodology

The team was composed of two members, a Nepali consultant with broad experience in Nepal as a Forester as well as being an organizational development consultant, and an international consultant with an extensive Community Forestry background. The total time to find the information for this report, counting the time for orientation, report writing, and the Nepalese debriefing meeting was 16 and 20 days respectively. A large number of documents were consulted which are listed in Annex 3.

The team tried to learn from a number of government officials at the national level what they knew and thought about the project and their ideas for any possible future project. We visited FECOFUN at the national level to discuss with them their role, concerns and ideas for the future and how they had changed after the project had conducted Good Governance training with their group. In 5 districts we met with the District FECOFUN groups and with 7 FUGs and again asking them to describe their activities, discuss issues and identify changes they had made in their groups after having Good Governance and Legal Rights training. From several of these groups we obtained their original constitution and management plans and the ones they developed as a result of the training in order to have an objective way to document changes. We observed one training session. We were able to speak with three DFOs. We visited the Institute of Forestry (IoF) and discussed their program of community forestry and the input of conflict resolution training provided by RECOFTC and what educational opportunities RECOFTC might provide in the future. We also talked with a number of people from other projects, both in the field and in Kathmandu, to learn of their

perspectives and project approaches and what they did or did not know about this small project. Where appropriate, we inquired about ongoing or potential complementary activities. (See Annex 5). We spoke with members of 3 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Concerned Groups, an advocacy CBO made up of lawyers, teachers, government staff, members of FUGs and FECOFUN, and in some cases DFOs. Two of the three DFOs we met are actively working with FECOFUN and one of these is an active member of the Concerned Group. We also consulted RECOFTC, WATCH and SDC. At the end of the Evaluation, the findings were shared and discussed with all major stakeholders, in a half-day workshop at the SDC office. (See last section of Annex 5).

Limitations of the evaluation

At the local level and even at the district level we were able to see evidence of changes and results. However, at the national level the political and personal issues clouded the situation with a number of conflicting stories, which, in many cases were not accompanied by documentation or concrete evidence. The report tries to include the different perspectives but the evaluators could not always judge where the “objective truth” lay. The evaluation is based on the documents produced by the project and the way people perceived changes the project has brought as well as issues they raised.

In the project districts, many other projects and other CF activities are also being implemented, including some on different aspects of governance. Many times this project worked with others, usually in an informal way. A limitation of the evaluation is the difficulty to demarcate a line of influence of different initiatives and interventions.

Findings from the evaluation

Project relevance in relation to CF issues

In recent years community forestry has become a learning ground for other development programs. There is growing interest from several sectors to use FUGs as an entry point for other development agendas. The possibility of making FUGs a developmental entry point was expressed by a member of the National Planning Commission in the recently held 4th National Community Forestry Workshop. The CF program has been recognized as a national priority program in the 10th five year plan and in the poverty reduction strategy paper. The Regional Director of Pokhara stated to us that FUGs are the only democratically elected entity existing in the country at the moment. Despite all these positive signals and progressive features, there are a number of issues that are critically important for CF success to make it a people's program in reality.

A paper from the 4th National Community Forestry Workshop by Sharma and Acharya (2004) identified the issues which relate to good governance from a study they did on community forestry governance throughout Nepal. This study consulted some 300 people from the MoFSC, DoF, donor agencies, project staff, user groups, civil society organizations and their federations, and individuals. The study is informative to the relevance of the project in that it assessed the governance situation of community forestry management at user group level and identifies the following as important issues needing to be addressed.

- ? weak organizational, managerial and technical capacities of civil society (the FUGs);

- ? lack of transparency and equitable benefit-sharing practices with elite domination in access and control over resources;
- ? exclusion of the most vulnerable people of the community: women, ethnic minorities; people marginalized and disadvantaged from the mainstream of forestry development, and benefits;
- ? poor communication, coordination and networks of users to make their voice heard in policy considerations;
- ? weak partnership between government, private sector and civil society resulting in marginal benefits;
- ? absence of transparency, accountability and democratic participation of forest users in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of community forestry management and poor ownership in community forestry;
- ? inadequate resources to cope with increased financial and human requirements in community forestry management; and
- ? deforestation, conflict, poverty, and social crisis.

These documented issues illustrate that this small project is addressing real concerns in the Nepali situation and is relevant. Except the weakness of partnership of government, private sector and civil society at the national level, the project addresses most of the above aspects in one way or another. The evaluation team also found the goals and results of the project are in line with the SDC's transversal themes which include governance and social equity. The project has also tried to address poverty reduction through more equitable division of benefits, although increasing benefits, especially from small forest plots, is an issue which should be expanded in the future. The project was designed to share learning from this first phase at a wider level in a future phase.

Through a range of activities the project focused on bringing changes of governance characteristics in FUGS and FECOFUN and brought out more transparency, accountability, and participation, especially of women and disadvantaged groups at district and FUG levels. In the context of civil society's role in community forestry and the limited efforts being given to strengthen them, the evaluation team sees the project goals and its activities as especially relevant, coherent and consistent with the issues of community forestry in Nepal.

Project achievements

The project was designed to contribute to the development of multi stakeholder platforms, forums and arrangements at village, district and national levels for key actors in CF development. To achieve this, goals and objectives were identified. Based on our visits at central, district and with a number of FUGs in selected districts, discussions with a range of people and studying the published reports, the evaluation team observed outstanding changes at district and FUGs levels.

At Central FECOFUN the project activities enhanced conceptual understanding of the issues of governance and gave the leadership an opportunity to reflect on the FECOFUN's constitution, values and principles. Many of the indicators identified by the members in an assessment of the characteristics of good governance were already in practice within FECOFUN central, whereas some other points will require a constitutional amendment which was planned for the next meeting. There are divisions within central FECOFUN some of which appear to relate to an internal election to take place in two years. There was also some level of resentment expressed toward the project. Some members even claimed that the project had created conflict within Central FECOFUN which in turn would bring division if it continued as such. However, the leadership at the debriefing session in Nepal put forth a different opinion stating that there are some conflicts but they were not caused or exacerbated by this project and that it is important for this project to continue.

The evaluation team visited and participated in discussions with District FECOFUN members of Kaski, Rupandehi, Kapilbastu, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Kavre. The project carries out a series of activities on good governance at district level which includes the groups selecting criteria for good governance and establishing indicators by which to measure their progress as a group in managing with good governance. . The cover of the report has a picture of a woman officer showing a poster they had made of the criteria and indicators they had developed and used for discussing progress. All the members presented fascinating changes in the way the District FECOFUN functions. Although variations exist, they expressed a trend of positive improvement. They told us:

There is more participation of members and meetings are more regularized. Members understood the level of governance they used to practice and a need for improvement. They have identified the governance characteristics important to them, have identified indicators to monitor, and have developed action plans. The chairmen and secretaries used to take all decisions, now members have understood their own responsibility to take part in discussions and decision making and the leaders have seen the importance of sharing authority. Now there are more open discussions and every member knows what is going on.

The process is extended to FUGs through District FECOFUNs. The program at the FUG level begins with facilitators making visits to all the households of FUG members. Women told how important these visits, which sometimes lasted several hours, had been for their own consciousness raising and understanding of their role in resource management and in the FUGs. They were also the turning event for being allowed by their husbands and supported by their friends to become more active. After the home visits the group carried out social mapping to assess the caste and other social differences in the group and resource mapping to clarify the distribution and availability of natural resources. The groups establish criteria for wealth ranking and through a process the poorer members are identified. In areas where the group is concerned that identifying the more affluent members would make them targets for the Maoists only the poorest people were identified. The FUGs went through the same process as had been done at the district and central FECOFUN where the group selected criteria and established indicators of good governance by which to measure their own progress. Standards for becoming a Model User Group have been developed and groups eagerly try to meet these standards.

Many spoke of the difference the program had made to all members. One higher cast leader said he had formerly made all the decisions and he had thought that was what he was supposed to do and the others thought so too. Now he realized for the first time the importance of relinquishing control and encouraging lower cast members to take leadership. Participants reviewed their progress in regular sessions. The evaluation team tried to explore the changes that are the result of the above project activities. The changes (which vary from FUG to FUG) as described by FUG members are:

Awareness of rights and duties has increased. The level of knowledge and skills has been enhanced. There is change in the decision making process in the FUGs. Previously the decisions were made by a few members, now many members are involved. The participation of FUG members has increased including more participation of women. Women are coming forward in making decisions and building consensus. There is also a great deal more participation by the disadvantaged including in the decision making process. There is greater transparency in FUGs. Members now know what is earned by the group and where and how it is spent through public audits. The FUG meetings are held more regularly. New operation plans and constitutions have or are being prepared. Resources are better managed.

There are no accurate statistics of the number of members and the roles they play disaggregated by caste and gender and in some FUGs the makeup of leadership is in the process of changing.

However, in all visited FUGs, members reported to us that there had been a substantial increase of women and members from lower castes participating in decision making. We observed women members coming forward with pride and enthusiasm to tell us the achievements their FUGs made. The same was observed related to caste. There was change in committee composition after the GFG training. For example, the committee composition of the Samaymai FUG in Rupandehi was 10 males and 3 females. After the GFG program was initiated they reformulated their committee to include 14 females and 9 males.

The evaluation team observed a distinct change in the new and old operational plans and constitutions. In the new constitutions many provisions have been included to address poverty issues. Although the focus is not universal a number of the FUGs have dedicated returns of a larger percentage of goods produced or discounts for the poor and one told of reserving a 9 ha plot for the poor. One had built grade and high schools opened to include all children. When the poorer children did not attend they talked to their parents and learned that even without paying fees, poorer families reported they could not do without the income children provide. The FUG is looking for a strategy to solve this problem. Similarly, the new operation plans are more progressive in terms of management and utilization where as the old ones focused on protection and plantations.

The project also supported the establishment of Environment and Natural Resources Concerned Groups at district level. These are informal groups that meet regularly to discuss forestry issues and encourage government to hand over forests to local communities. A network of CF supporters called COFSUN has also been facilitated by the project as a forum for sharing and discussing issues and experiences. The project recently supported COFSUN to organize its national assembly which formed a 17 member executive committee with 5 female members and one lower caste representation. Six of the members come from FECOFUN. Other members are representing NGOs like HIMAWANTI, a consulting company (NORMS), Churia Forest Development Project, DDC federation, Rangers Association Nepal, and also some freelance consultants. The project also initiated ecosystem management discussions with FUGs in the Begnas area of Kaski and the Butwal area of Rupandehi. The idea of eco-management is to support FUGs in particular areas to coordinate with each other and other partners exploring opportunities and issues for managing natural resources at watershed level, beyond the community forestry borders. They are also exploring the possibility of bringing community forestry into the Clean Development Mechanism (Carbon Sequestration Exchange).

Varieties of other trainings were also organized for different groups of people. These include legal awareness training, proposal writing training, financial management training, and conflict management training. (See Annex 1 for the details of project achievements.)

Effectiveness, efficiency and organizational arrangements

The evaluation team found the project amazingly effective., especially given its small scale and its short duration. Although there are other groups forming FUGs and perhaps discussing organizing and governing natural resources, they did not seem go to depth of analysis and self evaluation which caused basic organizational or institutional changes that were found in this project. Many previously formed FUGs reported that they had previously been unaware of equity and participation issues. The reorientation provided by this project caused groups to make an entirely new approach to benefit distribution and the need for all castes and social groups and for women to become involved and to benefit. The changes the groups made in their constitutions and their forest management plans illustrate the unique contribution of this project. In observing a training session

for facilitators the participants were actively involved, they sang and clapped, made issue cards and sorted them, created and discussed village maps and in every way were interested and actively participating. The changes in the involved communities were apparent. An unforeseen output of the project has developed where Model User Groups for example in Kaski, having gone through good governance training, are being asked by neighboring communities for help in improving their governance. The civil society groups that WATCH has stimulated or helped organize, including the Concerned Groups and COFSUN, have greatly expanded interest in effective CF and the sharing of information. WATCH has also given training to a group of journalists to report on the activities of different FUGs and local community forestry issues. This group publishes feature articles and feed information to a network of local papers. The area where the project was not as effective was in obtaining policy level understanding or support for these activities. (See organizational arrangements below.)

The evaluation team saw the project as efficient. WATCH is dedicated to being cost effective in order to carry out more activities and train more people. The cost of training, which includes transport, food, lodging and materials ranges between \$3.00 and \$7.00 per person per day, depending on the location of the training. (The WATCH facilitators' salaries are not included in these figures as they are paid separately.) As an example of this approach, WATCH partners with women's groups in the various training sites to cook the meals, giving local income opportunities and at the same time producing nutritious inexpensive meals. As will be seen in detail in Annex 1, the outputs of this small project have been quite numerous and impressive.

The most discussed aspect of the project is the organizational arrangement. It is true that the multiple levels of institutions make management more complicated. There are simpler and more direct ways to design such a program, but it is necessary to analyze what contribution each organization has or can make before considering changing the arrangements.

RECOFTC had several activities to implement during this project. It must be recognized that during this project period RECOFTC was going through a basic reorganization and some staff has changed. However, RECOFTC carried out many of its expected activities, though it was unable to carry out others. It was considered during the project design that RECOFTC's position as a regional organization would enable it to play a major part in developing DoF participation in the Project Support Committee. There were visits from RECOFTC but there was not agreement by DoF to participate. A task which RECOFTC was to do was to supply international consultants. They did this for such things as offering training to the staff of the Institute of Forestry on conflict resolution. They recently supported making two videos and another one is in process (2x WATCH and 1x RECOFTC). Two videos are for training, one of the FUG formation process and the other on governance. These videos will be used for training purposes. Another video being produced by RECOFTC focuses on equity concerns in Chure and Terai. RECOFTC provided a SWOT exercise for Central FECOFUN. They also provided consultants to support financial management and reporting in WATCH. They contributed funding to the very important 4th National Community Forestry Workshop. Information and communications from RECOFTC are reported to have been important in the relation of the donor to the project. However, the introduction of the farmer field school approach and other post formation support envisaged in the original document did not materialize. For more details see Annex 1.

WATCH, as an NGO, is recognized and respected for the role it has played in supporting equity and improving conditions for the poor. Its training is considered among the best in the country. This project was built not only on the reputation of WATCH but the vast experience it had in working with FUGs and FECOFUN. During the project concepts have developed from providing training to

developing more internally active processes including self evaluations. There has been a great deal of learning about the processes and effective approaches and development of material which is not only being used but is beginning to be shared with other CF stakeholders and projects such as CARE Nepal's SAMAPAN. This project is exceptionally effective in changing local attitudes and understanding of the concept of governance, the importance of participation and in establishing group auto-formation of rules and practices in dealing with management of forest resources

There have been comments about WATCH working in a way that is not transparent to some groups or individuals. The least transparent part of the program was during the first six months, the first third of the project, a time in which WATCH was trying to move slowly until a Project Advisory Committee was created with the support of SDC and RECOFTC. After it was finally accepted by all that the government would not participate and this committee was not going to function as planned, the program took off on its own and activities have moved at a fast speed. WATCH is an NGO and as such is sometimes outspoken when it feels policy is moving in a manner that will be negative for the poor. In this political climate, discussions of Nepalese problems and issues in CF, especially in international forums, is not easily tolerated. This has created a problem of interrelationships between government and this project. However, a number of people from the government and from NGOs report that there has been a warming of relationships recently, especially after the collaboration during the 4th Community Forestry Workshop. It is expected that WATCH will be as verbal on positive policies for FUGs as it has been on the less positive policies. WATCH should be seen as a sincere and dedicated force for the poor and not be expected to be silent in issue and policy discussions. NGOs frequently make their largest contributions by bringing issues to policy level, which can upset government officials, making them not eager to collaborate. RECOFTC, as an international organization, could be expected to play a role of facilitating the relations between WATCH and other civil society organizations and MoFSC. It is suggested in the formulation of a next phase that the roles of each partner are more clearly understood and protected.

FECOFUN. The evaluation team considers FECOFUN an extremely important organization, in fact, necessary for retaining the support of FUGs and to represent its concerns. This federation brings together elected officials from the various districts to examine district and community level issues. The project has worked through Central and District FECOFUNs giving sub-contracts for forming local facilitators and carrying out specific training, often with the support of professional WATCH facilitators. FECOFUN at the central level has been a partner with WATCH since its inception, long before this project started. Recently some of the members of its Central Committee have stated that they feel they could run contracts directly without the oversight of WATCH. However, some District FECOFUN members reported to the evaluation team that they are not given adequate communications and clarity on budget issues from the central group and come to WATCH for clarification. It is the opinion of the evaluation team that FECOFUN should be supported, but that it still needs oversight. Alternative arrangements for further strengthening management and other skills are discussed in the section of options for the future project.

Management and relevance of expenditures

The project document has identified three implementing partners – RECOFTC, WATCH, and FECOFUN – accountable for the implementation of the project work plan. RECOFTC was to act as the main administration and management unit while WATCH was to contribute to local project administration and management, and FECOFUN to identify, plan and implement the activities identified in the logical framework.

The project document itself was not adequately realistic and clear. The activities and outputs described in the project document were found to lack precision, causing some misunderstandings, especially in relation to roles of partners. The goals and objectives of the project are too optimistic for a one and half year project period. The activities in the log frame were retained when the project was shortened from three years to half that time. This led to a revision in March 2004 but it was too late to make any significant improvement as there remained only five months of implementation. This revision of the project log frame process included revisions in budgetary allocations. According to RECOFTC, these changes have been reported to SDC and were approved, as per the contract. The evaluation team compared the budget expenditure to the total budgeted amount during design and tried to explore the reason of significant changes.

To achieve the output # 2-Roles and strategies of VDC and DDC in CB NRM development – some initial meetings were conducted with the DDC and VDC coordination committees. These efforts were not able to be continued in the absence of elected officials. In output # 7, it was realized that not much could be done in income generating activities until a reasonable level of good governance is established. Some of the expenditure that in fact was incurred in output # 8 on facilitation and training skills was moved to the line for international consultants. In output # 9, good governance orientation at IoF and for district forestry officials in Kaski were initiated. However, the relationship at national level limited collaboration of officials making this training unable to move further. The allocations for output # 11, strategic analysis, and output # 13, effective M&E systems were found to be overestimated partly due to the short time of the project.

On the one hand, all these changes in the expenditures in the above mentioned outputs were significantly lower than the budgeted amount. On the other hand, the expenditures for international consultants and in output # 14 on lessons shared are found to have increased significantly. According to RECOFTC the travel cost of RECOFTC personnel, and their numerous visits in connections with other outputs are also included under this item. The reason for over expenditure in output # 14 is reported to be a larger number of publications than expected, production of three videos, and visit of 28 people to India for sharing and learning. The budgetary distribution managed by the different partners are as follows: RECOFTC \$196,538 (including staff and activities based in Nepal such as training with IoF and contribution to the national workshop on CF), WATCH \$112,809 and FECOFUN, COFSUN and Concerned Groups \$84,702.

Both RECOFTC and WATCH felt there was appropriate freedom in the expenditure mechanism but confusion was under which category to put which expense. Financial categories became clearer after the revision of activities in March 2004. The evaluation team found they have an excellent accounting system with an account from RECOFTC working with the accountant from WATCH and regular auditing by registered auditors.

Issues and constraints

Issues of project formulation and implementation

The project was formulated in the context of ongoing activities and a rich experience of collaboration between RECOFTC and WATCH within a global program. It was, no doubt, this depth of understanding and the ongoing processes which made the large number of outputs possible. The project was designed to support governance in FUGs and FECOFUN. Most participants in those groups already knew WATCH. When the new project was first formulated it was to continue activities in civil society. When SDC started discussions for potential funding of this project they wanted to involve MoFSC in order to strengthen policy discussion and support for these civil society organizations.

During the first six months of the project, several factors slowed implementation. SDC was negotiating a bilateral project with DoF and SDC requested the project to create a Project Support Committee with participation of the DoF. RECOFTC and WATCH reported discussing the project with Forestry officials and inviting them to participate. A project support committee was formed but DoF did not take part. Officials explained that DoF had only informally, not officially, participated in the design of the project, and subsequently the project had not been approved by the Ministry. Under these conditions no forestry staff would be able to participate.

One output that could not be carried out, due to no fault of the project, was a plan in the document to work with locally elected Village Development Committees (VDCs) and District Development Committees (DDCs). The 1999 Local Self-Governance Act increased the power of these groups to plan, prioritize, implement, coordinate and evaluate all development activities at the village and district levels and gave them a measure of authority over natural resources. In the project document it was considered important to help FUGs, VDCs and DDCs establish a mechanism to define roles and to collaborate. However, when the five year terms of these elected officials were completed (2001) their mandate was not extended and no more elections were held. Most of these two organizations became defunct.

The Maoists insurgency has, in general, affected the project implementation as there have been numerous bandh (closures), chakka jam (transport closures), curfews, and restricted movements. The district level FECOFUN and local FUGs have continued to carry out their activities. However, recently some of the facilitators and WATCH staff have had to limit their access to some villages. More specifically, there was difficulty in organizing meetings and assemblies, as well as restriction on movement especially for outside facilitators. In several instances WATCH staff was also asked to get Maoist's permission to enter in their strong hold areas. The evaluation team was unable to go to one village but the members of the FUG and FECOFUN were able to come to a meeting in the town instead. WATCH reports having fewer restrictions from the Maoists than many projects as their approach is generally supported by the Maoists and security. Some of the district FECOFUNs also reported that they have maintained good relation with both security personnel and Maoists. The review team sensed that the people in villages and districts towns are sand-wiched between security men and Maoists and are reluctant to express the hardship caused by either side for the fear of trouble afterwards. This political unrest continues to be of concern for future work.

Project's transparency

During our meeting at MoFSC and DoF, the officials said they knew nothing of the project or its implementation. This was the official version. However, unofficially we learned that the project

document, work plan and budget had been shared and there had been a great deal of early discussion about this project within the Ministry and Department. After the government declined to participate in the PSG much less information sent to the Department was circulated. The Chief of the Community Forestry Division remarked that this "good governance project did not appear to have good governance in itself" in that he found it was not transparent and did not involve all concerned parties. The issue of transparency was also raised by some of the Central FECOFUN and District FECOFUN members. The main concern at the central level was that details of the project were learned by them little by little, not giving them the whole picture of the project and roles of each partner at one time. WATCH reported discussing and sharing the project document, log frame and budget with the above groups, however these documents were themselves not easily understood or clear. At the district level FECOFUN members felt that they did not receive information from Central FECOFUN in a timely manner nor did they fully understand the funding amounts or mechanisms. There is a feeling at different levels that the project is not transparent so it is important to involve more people in the design of any new phase so they will feel ownership. As said before, in the project document the roles of each participating group are not clearly defined and perhaps some less formal information sheets are also needed.

Sharing among other CF projects

The evaluation team visited a number of bilateral community forestry projects and NGO activities in Nepal which included CF issues and activities. Governance in its broader meaning such as how people can organize to manage forests is a major concern for each of them. Some project personnel both in Kathmandu and in the field knew about this specific project and about its conflicts with the government at national level. There was collaboration with some projects. Other project personnel expressed little knowledge about the details of its activities, approaches and results.

The issue of governance is regarded as such an important aspect of the second generation of community forestry that it was one of the thematic areas of discussion in the recently held 4th National Community Forestry Workshop. A total of 32 papers were presented specifically on governance, the highest number of papers among the themes. Other thematic areas were livelihoods and sustainable forest management which are, again, related to governance. This shows the pool of interest, information, learning and experience on forest governance issues that exists. The project played a large part in organizing the governance theme in the Workshop. It is important to build on this initiative and to continue and to increase the sharing and learning on this topic among projects. We recommend that information sharing should be a more formalized focus in the follow up project.

Fear of program closure

The District FECOFUNs and FUGs with which the project worked have shown much enthusiasm in continuing to build on what they have achieved so far. Several of the District FECOFUN members expressed the fear of program closure in the middle of the change process they have initiated. Some members told the evaluation team the "iron is hot; don't let it become cold." The interest and commitment at district level definitely shows the need to continue the process initiated. The team feels that some funds should be found to keep the facilitators working even while a follow-up project is being formulated. It also feels that it is extremely important to keep the same approach to governance which has been initiated. We fear that if the project changes approaches or even partners in the training and backstopping aspects, that there will be confusion. There are many approaches to forest management and organizing its implementation that a new focus or method on

good forest user group governance could cause confusion and disrupt the extremely effective ongoing process.

Reaching more FUGs for the change process

The project's change process has reached many FUGs through FECOFUN, but in a direct and intensive way during this short project period it has reached 3-5 FUGs in each of the eight districts. The changes in governance characteristics seen in those FUGs need to be shared with other FUGs in order to make a significant impact on addressing governance issues in community forestry throughout Nepal. To reach more FUGs and initiate a change process is a challenge to be addressed while thinking about next phase of the project. Using already trained people to hone their skills and begin to facilitate this process in neighboring communities is a promising activity we recommend should be expanded in a next phase.

Need for GFG training to all FUG committee members

The project provided special GFG training for four members selected from members of FUG Committees, hoping that these trained people would be able to initiate the changes in governance characteristics within their FUGs. As changing governance required changes of personal intention, attitude and behavior, it takes a great deal of skill to facilitate this process. In several meetings the four trained people expressed much difficulty in adequately influencing other members of their own committee. Both the trained members and the larger committees expressed the need for training all committee members.

Encouragement to women leaders

The evaluation team asked many women leaders both committee members of FUGs and women FECOFUN members how they felt being in leadership positions. All of them reported that at first they had much difficulty in convincing other members of their families and communities. They shared bitter experiences of husbands and in-laws complaining of their attending meetings and participating in forest management. They also reported that it took them a few years to fully gain their families' and friends' support. There is perhaps a need to approach women leaders individually and encourage and counsel them so that they feel supported as they try to handle community as well as household tasks.

A more transparent process of selecting facilitators and coordinators is needed

As discussed in Annex 1, many District FECOFUNs were able to select the CF facilitators following an effective, objective and competitive selection process. However, some did not have an appropriate process. The same issue arose in a case of a coordinator who was appointed a month before the team's visit but still had no idea about the role to be played and what her duties were. This shows a need to make a transparent process during selection of facilitators and coordinators and illustrates the importance of clearly defining roles and processes to help new facilitators and coordinators know what is expected.

FECOFUN facilitators need more skills and incentives

The facilitators are the ones who work closely with FUG members and who can initiate a process of change. Therefore, the level of skills they have and acquire makes a big difference to the FUGs. Facilitators found the training they had was excellent and requested more technical training on inventory and NTFPs and more training to improve their facilitation, governance and conflict management skills.

Remuneration for facilitators is set by the District FECOFUN groups and varied from Rs 2500 to Rs 4500. Some reported they were not always paid on time or for their full work. An issue common to all facilitators was they were not given any transport funds for making FUG visits. The evaluation team realizes having bus money is a most important factor to let them visit FUGs more frequently. Not paying this cost is a disincentive. In the follow up project these issues of incentives needs to be well thought and discussed.

More communication between Central and District FECOFUNs

The District FECOFUNs often complained about not having clear guidelines and adequate communication from Central FECOFUN. The five District FECOFUNs were contracted by Central FECOFUN to implement the governance activities. This makes the duty of Central FECOFUN to provide all guidelines and support issues related to project implementation. District FECOFUNs were found communicating the issues to WATCH rather than to Central FECOFUN. The evaluation team recognizes a need of enhanced communication between Central and District FECOFUNs.

A clear guideline for expenditure of the fund and roles of participants

District FECOFUNs and even the central level committees were not clear about the kind of expenditures they can make and what kind they cannot. In one district, we found that the facilitators were not paid, with the officers saying that they did not have enough money to pay their remuneration. But, this district had not been able to spend even one third of the contract amount. Looking at their contract we found that there was no clear guideline for expenditure.

District FECOFUNs were also found to be unclear about the roles of WATCH and Central FECOFUN with regard to project activities. Although their contract was with Central FECOFUN they were asking WATCH questions on what to do and what not to do. In our opinion, they were communicating with WATCH when their contract was with FECOFUN and the communications should have been with Central FECOFUN. This illustrates that the roles of WATCH, Central FECOFUN and District FECOFUN were not spelled out clearly enough.

Options and recommendations

The evaluation team hopes the above issues and constraints are considered in formulating a follow on project. There are, of course, a number of unknowns such as changes and direction of CF under the new Nepalese Secretary of Forestry, the changing political situation for rural communities, as well as changes in personnel of stakeholder groups, the role of specific NGOs, strengths of the reorganized RECOFTC and interests of other countries to be involved in meaningful ongoing

exchanges if the project were to include a regional component. These would need to be explored for any follow up project formulation. Also, decisions of the donor(s) will influence the choice of working through a regional organization, the DoF and directly with civil society.

The review team suggests the broad objective of the next phase continues to be enhancing governance at village, district and national level for sustainable CF management. Details will have to be completed during the project design as well as new ideas explored. Some point to recent media on the potential for Nepal to relate its CF program to Clean Development Mechanisms as outlined in Kyoto Protocol. Nepal's bio-gas program is in the process of getting enrolled. The next project could facilitate further exploring the possibility to bring the CF under Clean Development Mechanisms and thus expand the resources available to communities..

The greatest two opportunities for a future activity with civil society would be learning and sharing successful project approaches and expanding the coverage through well trained local facilitators and village exchanges to include a much larger area of the country. It is important that this exceptional experience and its impacts in enhancing governance characteristics of local FUGs and FECOFUNs are fully analyzed and documented and made available to others. The second opportunity includes strengthening skills of current and future facilitators and FUG members so that they will be able to more fully carry out and expand their activities with less support from outside organizations. The experiences need to be further shared from one community to another. Many of the new approaches for training communities in self management of good governance in forestry which have been developed by the project already have been documented in manuals and videos. These materials will be extremely useful in both sharing experiences and in expanding the rural area covered by Model User Groups.

What we evaluators saw in the field was quite impressive and we believe that there should not be a break in the uniquely effective processes which have been initiated at field level. A follow up project should continue to address the range of issues for community forestry in Nepal as identified earlier, putting increasing focus on returns to the community forest managers, especially the poor. Although the team found the current project working very effectively, it feels that a new phase should involve the addition of new partners and increased collaboration with other projects. For example, areas where NGOs and other project and forestry personnel could support the project is in specific themes such as technical knowledge on NTFP, designing and monitoring simplified forest management plans expanding revenue especially for the poor in areas where community forests are very small, as well as other topics to be identified by the facilitators and the FUG members. It would also be desirable to invite all partners including the DoF to join a project support committee and to create a regional Asian forum for sharing issues, ideas and experiences.

The team was requested to examine organizational options for a future phase, if warranted. The team feels that the excellent results at district and field levels certainly warrant the follow-up project envisioned when this trial period of a year and a half was initiated. The following are four organizational scenarios several suggested by and discussed with various people. Each appears to be potentially workable in light of existing opportunities. The team feels the final one, which is more fully discussed, takes advantage of opportunities and builds on the strengths of each organization. These alternatives are as follows:

1. **A more national focus.** RECOFTC would continue its role but directly with Nepal, and with the actualization of the Project Support Committee. RECOFTC appears to have good relations with the current Nepalese line agencies and could play a role working as a broker between the government and civil society and thus creating a steering mechanism. Relationship and team building would be important among the three partners, DoF, FECOFUN and WATCH. The drawback of this choice is that it does not

benefit from the comparative advantage of RECOFTC's regional mandate and loses the opportunity for DoF to share experiences with other countries in the Asian region and the opportunity to have staff, especially of the IoF trained by RECOFTC.

2. **Changing NGOs, leaving out WATCH.** RECOFTC would directly work with FECOFUN at the national level, providing a support mechanism for team building, monitoring its internal good governance and strengthen its management capability. FECOFUN would have to have a project management unit perhaps using Nepali NGOs for that task. A Project Steering Committee would be important. This option is made up of three partners, DoF, FECOFUN and RECOFTC. This option would cause a break in the ongoing processes WATCH has developed in the districts and the team feels this would be a loss to the FUGs and even to FECOFUN.
3. **Leaving out RECOFTC.** FECOFUN could work with more NGOs and institutions developing a larger pool of NGOs who have special strengths in the implementation of CF projects and analysis of issues. WATCH would continue to support FECOFUN but focus its efforts especially at the FUG and district level, continuing to expand its training, consolidating lessons learned and further developing good governance approaches. This option would involve a Project Support Committee including DoF but would not involve RECOFTC. It would lack the advantage of developing a regional sharing of experiences, the opportunities for training desired by IoF and other educational experience RECOFTC can provide and the mediating role RECOFTC can play between organizations.
4. **Continuing with current partners, inviting expanded participation of MoFSC and a larger number of participating NGOs, and Nepali consultants within a forum for a better exchange of information.** This approach is seen as two pronged. The first would work with policy and other national and regional issues and the second would focus specifically at the district and community level. There would be overlap between the two efforts, some of the same people would participate in both forums and each effort would benefit from the information developed in the other. The funding could be directly through the government or one prong through the government and the second directly with civil society.
 - ? Project Steering Committee would be organized at the national level which would encourage participation of MoFSC, members of line ministries, IoF, FUGs, FECOFUN, CBOs, advocacy groups, NGOs, RECOFTC and others involved in relevant CF activities. It would function in both regional and national discussions and the experiences of this project would be available for discussion and exchanges with other projects. In Nepal the forum would encourage all project personnel to share, examine and document their experiences and develop improved M&E and other tools and would explore the expertise and roles of various partners in order to collaborate more effectively. One appropriate role for DFO personnel might be to learn to help design and to monitor FUG operational plans and to work at the district and local levels with FECOFUN and other advocacy and membership organizations.

The DoF with RECOFTC would support Nepal as a focal point in the region for sharing experiences, especially related to user groups and their federations, as well as explore underlying issues such as how to address poverty and equity through community forestry and the policies which facilitate this type of approach. Several countries have already sent delegations to explore Nepalese experience and RECOFTC reports that a number of neighboring countries have expressed interest in finding a regional body within which to explore creating nationally appropriate user groups and federations. Such a regional group would meet regularly to share information, address issues and search for solutions from policy to field level. The theme would relate to good governance within user groups and federations of user groups and would stimulate intellectual thinking on the underlying conceptual and policy issues related to sustainable community forestry. RECOFTC could be responsible for organizing both national and regional meetings using its new concept of a regional neutral platform for exploring regional issues and its new regional thematic approach related to these issues. IoF and similar organizations could take advantage of this forum to explore with RECOFTC the potential for benefiting from RECOFTC's highly appreciated educational

expertise. Project staff and FECOFUN and FUG members both in Nepal and beyond could take advantage of this forum to gain new ideas and to document their activities for more effective sharing.

- ? The district and local level prong would also have a forum but one of field level personnel to share ideas and experiences of good governance and potential collaboration and sharing tasks between projects. At the Nepalese debriefing the evaluation team was told by a number of NGO personnel and consultants that they would like to form a specialized support group. From this group expertise could be drawn for FECOFUN or FUGs as needed. It could develop a structure enabling it to continue to support projects lessening the need for outside oversight. This second prong would focus specifically on strengthening governance in civil society and would continue training facilitators and creating model FUGs but with a new focus of creating a broader group of trainers and exchanges between FUGS. This prong could be funded through RECOFTC, as it is currently, or, as the Nepali participants in the debriefing suggested, directly with NGOs providing specific skills. For example, FECOFUN central might select an appropriate NGO(s) to provide a support unit and/or an advisor, to help this organization build a collaborative atmosphere and strengthen its conceptual and management skills.

In this second prong the focus would be to continue to fine tune training approaches and materials and to spread model user groups to a much larger area. FECOFUN with WATCH and perhaps other NGOs would identify where the most skilled facilitators and advanced groups and activities are and would select perhaps five districts. They could also select (3-5) members of Central FECOFUN for in-depth training as facilitators. These facilitators would go to identified districts and work with the best trainers from District FECOFUNs and FUGs until there is total coverage of FUGs in this initial set districts. As the facilitators become professional they would train more facilitators and move on to other districts, once Central FECOFUN and involved NGOs agreed it was timely to do so. The current project has created criteria for Model FUGs which might be further developed. It has yet to build criteria for model District FECOFUNs, which would be very useful.

The idea for this second prong would be to build on and share the results of the current activities in good governance and to strengthen skills of selected people as facilitators in the FUGs and District FECOFUNs. They would then progressively train others in an ever expanding coverage in more districts. The program design would have a built in strategy to progressively need less outside support. As FECOFUN becomes able to manage these activities on its own, as Model district FECOFUNs and FUGs share their experiences with others and an adequate number of local people are trained, the requirement of outside support will be lessened.

Depending on the situation in Nepal when the next phase of the project is designed, the evaluation team suggests the expected outcome at the end of a three year project might be:

- ? An active forum at regional level focused on user groups and federations with Nepal as the focal point and with representatives from other countries at both policy level and at grass root level.
- ? An active forum at national level with fruitful exchange and collaboration between policy makers, civil society and project staff.
- ? A minimum of five and up to ten model districts with fully and adequately trained model FUGs.
- ? 4-5 facilitators from Central FECOFUN trained so they have professional skills to continue the work and to train more facilitators in an ever expanding number of districts.
- ? Selected facilitators from District FECOFUNs and FUGs who have sufficient skills after two years of training and working in their own districts to share their experiences and training skills in other districts where they will expand the Model User Group and Model FECOFUN process.
- ? An organized pool of NGOs who are ready to provide specific skills and expertise when needs are identified in the project.

It is the opinion of the Evaluation Team that this last and more completely presented option brings together the best elements of other options under a promising structure. We believe there should not be a break in the ongoing processes. We believe that the support of the Good Governance program being carried out in the local and district level is extremely important to the future of Nepal, both politically and environmentally. We believe a two pronged approach is viable with a Program Support Committee including members of RECOFTC, DoF, CBOs, NGOs, and perhaps the private sector. This forum could also strengthen communications between the different groups. Although many types of projects may be designed with different actors and goals, the continuation of this program is highly desirable, including the current partners. If the political situation in the MoFSC is such that they are able to participate in the design phase it would greatly strengthen a communication process lacking in the current program.

Our strong suggestion is that whatever option is chosen the important points to be considered are: that there should be no break in the ongoing process at the district and FUG levels, the learning from the present project must be continued, the efforts made at the District FECOFUNs and selected FUGs need to be expanded and the project formulation must be done with intensive consultation and be implemented with supportive partners.

Annex 1: Achievements made in each project goals and objectives

Goal # 1: To support development of effective institutional arrangements for improved forest governance

1.1 To support more effective representation of users and other primary stakeholders in forest governance

Activities carried out:

During the time between 2001 and early 2003 several activities were being implemented by WATCH through RECOFTC core program funds. The activities included preparation meetings with the executive and steering committee members of FECOFUN, workshops and training for good governance, workshops for developing model community forest user groups and several awareness raising workshops and trainings. These activities created a foundation for the project.

When the project was officially started in March 2003, several activities on good governance were implemented at national and district levels. The process was then extended to several FUGs through District FECOFUN. The project organized 21 Good Forest Governance (GFG) trainings for District FECOFUN of various districts and 4 Range Post FECOFUN. Many other GFG trainings were organized for Range Post FECOFUN and FUGs through District FECOFUN. Another bi-lateral project, Natural Resource Management Sector Assistance Program (NARMSAP), is also found supporting the FECOFUN of Kaski to organize this training of another six FUGs. Organizational assessment and team building were organized for 8 districts and several follow-ups, coaching and reviews and planning workshops were organized. A study tour for District FECOFUN was organized and two training manuals and training posters were developed. (See Annex 2 for detail activities carried out in each objective.)

During the good governance training the participants (FECOFUN members or FUG members) identified the characteristics of good governance and the indicators to monitor. Many of the District FECOFUN and FUGs were found to review the progress during their monthly or bi-monthly meetings. The district FECOFUN through a contract with Central FECOFUN in five districts and with WATCH in three districts organized various activities in the selected FUGs and in the districts. These include good forest governance trainings, awareness and interaction programs, campaign against a new tax of 40% on income from forest products, school level essay competition, bee keeping training, forest stakeholders meetings, orientation of good governance to other organizations, celebration of world environment day, interaction workshops for NTFP promotion and income generating activities. The type of activities varies from district to district. The facilitators selected by District FECOFUN are found to be providing support like house to house visits, preparing resource maps, organizing interest group meetings, preparing social maps, facilitating well being ranking and preparing operational plans and constitutions.

Changes observed/expressed:

The evaluation team tried to explore the changes that are brought by the above project activities. The changes we have observed are presented at three levels- FUG level, District FECOFUN level and at National FECOFUN level.

At FUG level:

The changes brought at FUG level are very encouraging to us. The kind of changes that FUG members expressed (which vary from FUG to FUG) are:

- ? Awareness of rights and duties has increased.
- ? The level of knowledge and skills has been enhanced.
- ? There is change in the decision making process in the FUGs. Previously, the decisions were made by few members, now many members are involved. The participation of FUG members has increased including more participation of women. Women are coming forward in making decisions and building consensus. There is also a great deal more participation by the disadvantaged.
- ? There is greater transparency in FUGs. Members now know what is earned, where and how it is spent.
- ? The FUG meetings are more regularized.
- ? Several species of fodder and cash crops have been planted.
- ? New operation plans and constitutions have or are being prepared.

Many FUG members gathered to express their feelings about the changes they have observed. Women members were present and coming forward with pride and enthusiasm to tell us the achievements FUGs made. There was change in committee composition after the GFG training. The committee composition of the Samaymai FUG in Rupandehi was 10 males and 3 females. After the GFG program was initiated they reformulated their committee to consist of 14 females and 9 males. In the Kapileswor FUG of Kavre they have 7 males and 2 females at the moment. They are discussing making the ratio 50:50 in their assembly next month. One of the FUGs of Balkumari in Bhaktapur district the evaluation team visited is made up of all women forest users. This forest was taken over by women when it malfunctioned during men's leadership some years ago. The women leaders proudly told what they had achieved after the good governance program was initiated in their FUG. Women expressed that they now know their legal rights and their reluctance to participate is greatly broken. Two local politicians appreciated the way women members have managed the FUG. They highlighted the commitment of women in managing FUG and transparency they have with the FUG funds. After every program they give participants details of the expenditures and income through a public auditing process. We observed their effectiveness and transparency could be a challenge to local village development committees and other local organizations which are mainly dominated by educated elites.

In all the FUGs we visited, the FUG members expressed their commitment to make theirs a model FUG by practicing the characteristics of good governance, planting more species in their forests, initiating income generating activities and enhancing economic status. They have found a willingness to address some of the issues of poverty and inequity. The Koilichaur FUGs of Kapilbastu, carried out participatory well being ranking of FUG members into six categories – A, B, C, D, E, F – and proposed in their operational plans to provide forest products at discounted rates to people who belong to lower categories. This process of well being ranking is practiced in all the selected FUGs where OPs are being revised. However, the members of Kapileshwor FUG in Kavre realized the possible extortion to rich categories if they are mentioned in the operational plan. So, they are planning to include the names of only lower category people who need support through the FUG program. The evaluation team appreciates the realization and commitment of FUGs to include poor in decision making and implementation of FUG activities and their commitment to address these issues.

The selected FUGs are either revising their operation plans and constitution or are preparing new ones in order to get forest land handed over to them to manage. The evaluation team observed a distinct change in the new and old OPs and constitutions. In the new constitutions there is the ranking of people of different well being categories and many provisions to address poverty issues are included. In the Bhumipjne FUG of Kaski, they have even proposed a trust fund for poverty alleviation. In the old constitutions, the head of household was regarded as the user where as in the new both male and female members are regarded as users. The new operation plans are more progressive in terms of management and utilization whereas the old

ones are focusing on protection and plantations. The evaluation team acknowledges these changes initiated through governance project.

Other neighboring FUGs are also found to show their eagerness to participate in the governance program. This willingness is partly managed by seeking support from other organizations in the Kaski district. District Forest Officer and NARMSAP staff supported the initiative to expand the project approach of governance training to other FUGs. The evaluation team regards this as an important achievement in bringing other stakeholders and supporters into the process.

At District FECOFUN level:

Out of 13,000 registered FUGs in the country about 9,000 are affiliated with FECOFUN. In almost all districts FECOFUN is active in raising awareness of FUGs and providing them coordination and implementation support. The project worked more intensively with eight District FECOFUNs, 5 of which were selected by National Executive Council of FECOFUN and 3 were selected by WATCH at the request of the Central FECOFUN. The project provided GFG training to many more District FECOFUNs and the demand from other districts and Range Posts are found to be growing.

The evaluation team visited and discussed with District FECOFUN members of Kaski, Rupandehi, Kapilbastu, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Kavre. All the members presented fascinating changes in the way the District FECOFUN functions. Although variations exist, they expressed a trend of positive improvement such as:

- ? There is more participation of members and meetings are more regularized.
- ? Members understood the level of governance they used to practice and a need for improvement.
- ? They have identified the governance characteristics important to them and identified indicators to monitor, and have developed action plans.
- ? The chairmen and secretaries used to make decisions and other members also used to think that this was the responsibility of leaders. Now, members have understood their own responsibility to take part in discussions and decision making. Now there are more open discussions and every member knows what is going on.

Some District FECOFUNs like Kaski and Bhaktapur are also found to develop their strategic plans. The Kaski FECOFUN has identified its vision as: "Organizational governance for sustainable forest management", and the Bhaktapur has a vision which states:

Good governing FUG and healthy green forests,
 Gender, caste, literate-illiterates treated as equal,
 Sustainable management and sustainable livelihoods,
 Good governance and developed institutions at FUGs and Federation

The evaluation team observed an excellent working relationship maintained by Kaski FECOFUN with district line agencies and district stakeholders, particularly with the DFO and Regional Director. We appreciated the coordination and leadership skills of the Kaski FECOFUN. This group has been able to influence governance characteristics and collaborate with other organizations on such topics as income generating and governance related activities. The chairman of Kavre FECOFUN shared his feeling of not doing anything but exhibiting feudal characteristics before he first understood the good governance characteristics in the GFG training last year. He then shared the personal changes that allowed him to understand others feeling and expressions and bring other members into the decision making process.

FUG selection process for GFG program implementation varies from district to district. Some district level FECOFUNs followed quite effective processes for this selection such as setting criteria of remoteness, rich vs. poor, FUGs with lower castes and levels of conflict, etc. FECOFUN members visited FUGs and

discussed these and other issues with them and also solicited suggestions from the DFO (as in Kaski). Others made general criteria and made the selection during a meeting of FECOFUN. We did not hear any complaints regarding FUG selection but the level of commitment displayed by FUG leadership had a great effect in the level of changes at FUG level.

District FECOFUNs were able to use existing human resources for facilitators. In making a selection of facilitators to be trained some districts followed a rigorous process of written examination and interviews and involved the DFO and other organizations. They were also able to make a mix of male-female and those from different caste groups (in Kaski). However, some districts were not able to follow an appropriate method for selection of facilitators. One reason given was a one-day advanced notice given by Central FECOFUN to select and send facilitators for a 30 days training. The selection process for the coordinator, selected a month ago, has also not followed any appropriate process in Rupandehi. The selected coordinator did not know at all about the role to be played. We perceived this as somewhat an "afno manchhe" culture playing a greater role in decision making.

Most of the facilitators were trained on constitution preparation and OP preparation for 7-10 weeks, which made them equipped for household visits, social and participatory mapping, resource mapping, well being ranking, focus group discussions and facilitating assemblies. To make their service more effective facilitators stated that their inventory skills need to be developed. They are also willing to further enhance their skills on facilitation, proposal writing, report writing, NTFPs, conflict management and also in good governance. The facilitator's remuneration varies from district to district from Rs 2,500 to Rs 4,500 per month. In all the districts facilitators were not provided the transport cost that would incur while visiting FUGs. This was found to be a demotivating factor for them to make frequent visits in the FUGs.

At Central FECOFUN:

In the GFG training conducted in Central FECOFUN, December 2002, criteria and indicators of good governance were identified, prioritized and action plan developed. Apart from several formal and informal meetings, the action plan was not regularly reviewed. However, in February 2004, a self-assessment exercise was conducted to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of FECOFUN itself and to plan further activities. These activities enhanced conceptual understanding on the issues of governance and gave an opportunity to reflect on the FECOFUN's constitution, values and principles. Many of the indicators were already in practice within FECOFUN where as some points required a constitution amendment.

About the less positive side, some members of FECOFUN expressed resentment toward the project. The dissatisfactions they expressed were: The project document was not made available to all FECOFUN members; there was WATCH's influence in selecting districts. Some members even claimed that the project had created conflict within Central FECOFUN which in turn would bring division if continued as such. The resentment expressed by these members was brought to the attention of the project facilitator and the evaluation team recognizes the need to discuss and clarify the misunderstandings.

1.2 To promote effective inter-institutional arrangements for forest governance

During the second half of the year efforts have been made to establish Environment and Natural Resources Concerned Groups at the district level. These are informal groups meet regularly to discuss forestry issues and encourage government to hand over forests to local communities. Membership in the Concerned Group varies from district to district and includes government staff, DDC and VDC representatives, journalists, NGO members, FUG and FECOFUN members, etc. The consolidation of this movement was fostered by the project.

Interaction meetings for this concerned group were organized in Kathmandu, Kaski, Nuwakot, Kapilvastu, Kailali, Kavre, Bhaktapur, Palpa, Gulmi, Arghachanchi, Banke, Salyan, Dang, Dolakha, Rolpa, Puthan, and Rupendehi. It is reported that this group has been established in 25 districts. On July 29-31, 2004 the central level meeting of the Concerned Group formed an ad hoc committee under the chairmanship of Khem Raj Parajuli and gave the group the name National Resources and Environment Concerned Group.

The evaluation team recognizes the role of the Concerned Group to strengthen community forestry in Nepal. In the meantime we also identify the need to reconcile the dissatisfaction expressed by the ex-chairman of FECOFUN Hari Prasad Neupane that he had been part of the group and chairman of an ad hoc committee formed three years ago but another ad hoc committee is now formed without including him.

The project also recognized the need for a national level forum for sharing and discussing issues and experiences in CF. This need was discussed by CF supporters and facilitators in four meetings during August and September 2003. In February 2004 a one-day national consultation workshop was organized with 250 participants. The meeting established a Community Forestry Supporters Network (COFSUN) and an ad hoc committee was formed. Subsequently, four regional meetings were organized, which identified representatives for national assemblies and discussed the MoU and the formalization process. The MoU and the charter have been finalized and a 17 member executive committee was formed by the national assembly held during 26-28 July 2004. The members include CF supporters and facilitators from government, NGOs, projects, professional associations and FECOFUN. The evaluation team is optimistic about COFSUN in redefining community forestry processes to address second generation issues of CF, and to provide an opportunity for its members to share information and field experiences.

The project also initiated an ecosystem management discussion with FUGs in the Begnas area of Kaski and the Butwal area of Rupandehi. The idea of eco-management is to support FUGs in particular areas to coordinate with each other and other partners to explore opportunities and issues to manage natural resources at watershed level beyond the community forestry borders. In Begnas area two interaction meetings of surrounding FUGs were organized and a common understanding on the concept of eco-management was developed, issues and opportunities explored and each FUG made an action plan to work further. In Butwal, seven FUGs joined together to enhance governance characteristics in each of their FUGs and to explore the possibility of working together under the eco-management concept. They are also exploring the possibility of bringing community forestry into the Clean Development Mechanism (Carbon Sequestration Exchange). The evaluation team supports linking community forestry management into the broad framework of holistic eco-management at watershed or landscape level and sees this as a forward thinking input of the project.

Goal # 2: To support capacity building and change processes that enhance the effectiveness of organizations involved in CF

2.1 To enhance capacities of CF support organizations (in planning, implementation, training, education)

The project organized several workshops and interactions to help district FECOFUN in developing model FUGs in their districts. Based on this training the district FECOFUN in each of eight districts selected 2-5 FUGs and implemented several activities to enhance governance characteristics. Some FUGs were also supported for income generating activities that include a Bel processing unit in Kapilbastu and bamboo craft making in Kaski.

The facilitators selected by District FECOFUNs were trained for a month to develop their skills in the operational plan and constitution preparation. Altogether 78 people were found to be trained as CF facilitators to prepare operational plans and constitutions.

Legal awareness training was provided to several members of FECOFUN and FUG members in Kaski, Butwal, Kavre, Bhaktapur, Kathmandu, and Nuwakot. These training were found to be helpful in raising the understanding of legal rights of users and in raising their participation and responsibility in CF activities.

Several other trainings were organized to enhance skills in writing proposals and in financial management. The project realized management of conflict as a critically important need for people working in community forestry. For this a TOT on managing conflict on community based forestry was organized where 38 people participated.

2.2 To support organizational development in agencies responsible for management and/or *administration of forest lands*

A one day good forest governance orientation was organized for forestry and NARMSAP staff in Kaski and for IoF faculty in Hetauda. This workshop was helpful in enhancing conceptual understanding and the need of good governance in community forestry. A need to organize good governance training for forestry staff was expressed but has not yet materialized.

The project provided a range of support in conducting the 4th National Community Forestry Workshop in Kathmandu. The project facilitator participated and contributed a great deal of time to the organizing committee of the workshop, reviewed papers on livelihood and governance and took a major role in facilitating the workshop. The project also provided materials, sponsored papers from COFSUN and Media, a guest speaker and a facilitator. The project is funding the production of proceedings from the meeting. This event was considered to be extremely important in Nepal and the active support of the project facilitator was greatly appreciated, Comments from the DOF noted that this collaboration had brought the DOF and WATCH closer together.

Goal # 3: To develop and support learning processes which enhance CF development in Nepal and in the region

3.1 To identify and analyze changes (opportunities and constraints) in forest governance for equity, efficiency and sustainability of community management and identify implications for support activities

Based on the good governance characteristics and indicators defined by FUGs and FECOFUN at central, district and range post level, follow up is being done. District FECOFUNs were found to monitor the changes more regularly than at central level. Several review and planning meetings were organized by the District FECOFUNs where they shared progress and made action plans for future work. A study tour of District FECOFUN groups was organized to share and strengthening learning. The project document envisioned an active Project Support Committee governing the project. The committee could not be active as imagined but met once in March 2004 and revised the log frame of the project.

3.2 To document and share lessons learned with other key actors in the region and to identify useful lessons from other countries and identify effective ways to use these in Nepal

A number of documents and reports have been produced and shared by the project at national and regional levels. The lesson learned from the project was shared at regional and international fora including: Asia

Regional GFG Workshops conducted by RECOFTC and in WSSD in Bali and Johannesburg. Previously a number of countries have expressed interest to come to Nepal to see what is happening in CF and especially with the formation and governance in user groups and the federation. During this project period representatives from the government forest services and NGOs came from Cambodia and Vietnam and were hosted by WATCH. According to WATCH and RECOFTC there is great interest among Asian and non Asian countries to learn more from Nepal and to share their activities.

Annex 2: Activities carried out in each objective

SN	Activities	Date	Place	No of participants	No of ethnic & lower caste P	M	F
Objective # 1.1 To support more effective representation of users and other primary stakeholders in forest governance							
1.	GFG Workshop for 16 district Chapter FECOFUN	24-29 March 2003	Rupandehi	26	3	14	12
2.	Workshop on Good Forest Governance	5-10 June 2003	Baitadi	18		10	8
3.	GFG Orientation Training	19 Aug-18 Sept 2003	Kaski district				
4.	GFG Training for Kaski district FECOFUN	7-11 Sept 2003	Pokhara	22	3	8	14
5.	GFG Training for Kathmandu FECOFUN	12-16 Sept 2003	Kathmandu	26		12	14
6.	GFG Training for Range Post level FECOFUN	27-29 Sept 2003	Mahadevsthan	34	11	18	16
7.	GFG Training for Rupandehi FECOFUN	9-13 Oct 2003	Butwal, Rupandehi	27	2	14	13
8.	GFG Training for Kavre FECOFUN	10-14 Nov 2003	Banepa, Kavre	24	3	13	11
9.	GFG Training for Range Post Ktm	29 Nov-1 Dec 2003	Lapsifedi	54	23	27	27
10.	GFG Training for Nawalparasi FECOFUN	16-20 Dec 2003	Nawalparasi	27	4	13	14
11.	GFG Training for Bhaktapur FECOFUN	21-25 Jan 2004	Bhaktapur	47	-----	25	22
12.	Range Post Level GFG Training, Pipara	31 Mar-4 Apr, 04	Pipara, kapilvastu	28	7	14	14
13.	GFG Training	14-18 March 2004	Kailali	30	8	18	12
14.	GFG Training	24-28 March 2004	Bardia	24	12	13	11
15.	GFG Training, Shishuwa Range Post, Kaski	19-23 April 2004	Pokhara	29	4	20	9
16.	GFG Training to Shital Nagar Range Post	9-13 May 2004	Rupandehi				
17.	GFG Training to the Kanchanpur District FECOFUN Chapter	9-13 May 2004	Kanchanpur	18	2	11	7
18.	GFG Training to the Surya Binayak Range Post, Bhaktapur	14-18 May 2004	Bhaktapur	35	3	15	20
19.	GFG Training to the District Chapter of Arghanchi FECOFUN	4 -8 July 2004	Sandhikharka, Arghanchi	22	2	11	11
20.	GFG Training to Salyan FECOFUN	19-23 July 2004	Salyan	20	5	11	9
21.	GFG Training to the District Chapter, Dolakha	19-23 July 2004	Dolakha	18	4		
22.	GFG Training to the Sindhupalchok	25-29 July 2004	Kathmandu	12	5	6	6
23.	GFG Training to the Ratmate Range Post	9-13 August 2004	Nuwakot	30	3	15	15
24.	GFG Training to Dang FECOFUN			30	7		
25.	GFG Training to Banke FECOFUN			28	3	19	9
26.	Organizational Assessment	23-29 Feb 2004	Kath, Kavre and others	21	1	16	5
				16	1	13	3
27.	Organizational Assessment and Team Building, Bhaktapur	18-24 April 2004	Kathmandu	18	1	11	7
28.	Self Assessment and Team Building Training		Kapilvastu	18	3	12	6
29.	Organizational Assessment and Team Building of the District Chapter	18-23 June 2004	Gulmi	22	6	11	11
30.	Organizational Assessment and Team Building of the Kaski District chapter	17 23 July 2004	Pokhara	12	2	7	5
31.	Self Assessment and Team Building of the District Chapter	31 July-6 Aug 2004	Nauwakot	13		7	6
Objective # 1.2 To promote effective inter-institutional arrangements for forest governance							
32.	Concerned Group Assembly, Kapilvastu						
33.	Interaction for Concerned Group Formation	6 Dec 2003	Kathmandu	86	7	66	20
34.	Kaski Concerned Group	22 Dec 2003	Pokhara	49	5	35	14
35.	Concerned Group, Nuwakot	24 Dec 2003	Trishuli	60	10	42	18
36.	Concerned Group, Kapilvastu		Kapilvastu	60		49	11
37.	Concerned Group, Rupandehi	5 Jan 2004	Butwal				
38.	Interaction for Concern Group, Kailali	2 April 2004	Kailali				
39.	Concern Group Interaction of Kavre	31 May 2004	Kavre	40	2	19	11
40.	Bhaktapur Concern Group Interaction	25 June 2004	Bhaktapur	41	3	28	13

41.	Palpa Concern Group Interaction	16 June 2004	Palpa	50	2		
42.	Gulmi Concern Group Interaction	18 June 2004	Gulmi	44	4		
43.	Arghachanchi Concern Group Interaction		Arghachanchi	53	6		
44.	Concern Group Interaction of Banke	13 July 2004	Banke	33	6		
45.	Concern Group Interaction of Salyan	19 July 2004	Khalanga, Salyan	51			
46.	Concern Group Interaction of Dang	23 July 2004	Dang	75	15		
47.	Concern Group Interaction of Dolakha	24 July 2004	Dolakha	57			
48.	Concern Group Interaction of Rolpa		Rolpa				
49.	Concern Group Interaction of Pyuthan	25 July 2004	Puthan				
50.	Concern Group National Convention, Butwal	30 July-1 Aug 2004	Rupendehi	46	4	26	8
51.	Media Awareness Workshop for Environment Journalist	10-14 April 2004	Rupandehi, Kapilvastu	17		16	1
52.	Eco-management Discussion	15 April 2004	Butawal- 6 CF Groups	22		14	8
53.	Media Awareness Workshop at Kaski District		Pokhara				
54.	Eco-management Discussion at Begnas, Kaski		Kaski				
55.	4 Consultative Meetings with CF supporters		Kathmandu				
56.	CF Supporters Gathering	8 Feb 2004	Kathmandu	251	35	139	112
57.	COFSUN Regional Sharing, Butwal	23-25 May 2004	Rupandehi	48			
58.	COFSUN Regional Sharing, Nepalganj	28-30 April 2004	Nepalgunj	47	6	25	22
59.	COFSUN Regional Sharing, Lahan	28-30 May 2004	Lahan	35	6	23	12
60.	Central Assembly of COFSUN	25 July 2004	Kathmandu	58	10	47	11
61.	National Assembly of COFSUN	26-28 July 2004	Kathmandu	60		31	29
Objective # 2.1 To enhance capacities of CF support organizations (in planning, implementation, training, education)							
62.	Model CFUG Workshop	11-15 Dec 2003	Kavre	27		18	9
63.	Interaction in Chhaimale with Committee Members	20 Dec 2003	Chhaimale	17	17	17	
64.	GFG Training for 6 CF Groups, Butwal	19-23 April 2004	Bautwal	36	12	26	10
65.	"Problem and Opportunity to Facilitator in CFUG Formation" Sharing Experience Workshop	18-20 July 2004	Butwal				
66.	Facilitator Training for the Facilitator of Eco-management of Butwal CF	31 July 2004	Rupandehi				
67.	Contract with FECOFUN Centre, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Kavre, Nuwakot, Rupandehi, Kapilvastu and Kailali districts						
68.	IGA Activities on Bel Processing	30 Apr-2 May 2004	Kapilvastu	10	3	8	2
69.	IGA Activities in Kaski User Group and Rupandehi User Group						
70.	Forest Management Plan Training to Facilitators of FECOFUN	27 Feb-26 March 2003	Sapatari district	25		12	13
71.	Forest Management Plan Training to Facilitators of FECOFUN	27 Feb-26 March 2003	Kavre district	26		13	13
72.	Forest Management Plan Training Manual Update	20 June-15 July 2004					
73.	Training of Trainers	20 July-5 Aug 2003	Kathmandu	22		12	10
74.	Forest Management Plan Training to Facilitators of FECOFUN	19 Aug-18 Sep 2003	Nuwakot	27	8	14	13
75.	Legal Awareness Training	26-30 Dec 2003	Kaski	30	5	20	10
76.	Legal Awareness Training, Kapilvastu	19-24 Jan 2004	Butawal				
77.	Legal Awareness Training	11-15 March 2004	Kavre	27	3	19	8
78.	Legal Awareness Training, Bhaktapur	2-6 April 2004	Bhaktapur	28	4	15	13
79.	Legal Awareness Training	10-14 April 2004	Nuwakot	27	6	20	7
80.	Proposal Writing Training	16-20 Feb 2004	WATCH, Kathmandu	10	1	3 5	7 10
81.	Training of Trainers on Managing Conflict on Community Based Forestry	25 April-4 May 2004	Kathmandu	38	8	28	10
82.	Financial Management Training for Treasurer	16-19 June 2004	WATCH, Kathmandu	22	5	15	8
83.	GFG Awareness for IOF Faculty	20 April 2004	IOF Hetauda	42		35	7

Objective # 2.2 To support organizational development in agencies responsible for management and/or administration of forest lands							
84.	GFG Orientation for Forestry Staff, Kaski	4 Dec 2003	Pokhara	35	3	27	8
85.	Support for 4 th National CF Workshop in: - participation and contribution in organizing committee; - participation in thematic groups: livelihood and governance - facilitating workshop and providing materials - sponsoring papers from COFSUN and Media - the project sponsored a guest speaker and a facilitator and is funding the production of proceedings from the meeting.						
Objective # 3.1 To identify and analyze changes (opportunities and constraints) in forest governance for equity, efficiency and sustainability of community management and identify implications for support activities							
86.	Next-Step Workshop with Partners	6-7 Feb 2004	Kathmandu	22			
87.	PSC Meeting	1 March 2004	Kathmandu	10			
88.	Monitoring Activities Report		In all districts				
89.	Review/Planning Meeting with FECOFUN	28-29 Jan 2004	Butwal, Rupandehi	35	5		
90.	Study Tour for District FECOFUN Chapter	24-31 May 2004	GFG Districts	15	7	8	
91.	GFG Program Sharing Meeting	14-16 June 2004	Kathmandu		7	23	16
Objective # 3.2 To document and share lessons learned with other key actors in the region and to identify useful lessons from other countries and identify effective ways to use these in Nepal							
A number of documents and reports have been produced and shared at national and regional levels. The lesson learned from the project was shared at regional and international fora including: Asia Regional GFG Workshops conducted by RECOFTC and in WSSD in Bali and Johannesburg. Three videos were produced by the project.							

Annex 3: Documents consulted

- Forest Action (2004) *Journal of Forest and Livelihood* Vol 4 (1).
- Kanel, K. R. (2004) *Economic Impacts of Forest Policy Changes: Perspective from Nepal*, A paper prepared for the workshop at Indiana University, Bloomington, USA.
- Malla, Y. B. (2004) *Impact of Community Forestry Policy on Rural Livelihoods and Food Security in Nepal*. Unasylva -202.
- Ohler, F. M. J. (.....) *Impact of Leasehold Forestry on Livelihoods and Environment in Nepal*.
- Sharma, N. N. and Acharya, B. (2004) *Good Governance in Community Forestry Management in Nepal From Concept to Project Design*, A paper presented to 4th National Community Forestry Workshop in Kathmandu.
- Shrestha, *et al* (2001) *Communities and Forest Resource Management: Lessons and Experiences of Community-managed Forest System in the Himalayas*. Proceeding of a workshop held in Pokhara, Nepal.
- Timsina, N. T. and Ojha, H. R. (2004) *Case Studies on Equity and Poverty in the Management of Common Property Resources in Nepal*, Proceeding of the National Workshop on Management of Common Property Resources and Equity: Exploring Lessons from Nepal.

Other documents produced by the project:

SN	Name of the Report	<i>District</i>
1.	Model District Branch Development Workshop, Kathmandu	Kathmandu
2.	Good Forest Governance Workshop, Kathmandu	Kathmandu
3.	Model Community Forest Development Workshop, Central FECOFUN	Kathmandu
4.	GFG Training Gorkha District FECOFUN	Gorkha
5.	Training on Facilitation Skill Development	Kailali
6.	Training on Facilitation Skill Development, Khariya CFUG	Rupendehi
7.	Model CFUG Development Training for District Branch	Rupendehi
8.	Model CFUG Development Muschha Ban and Laligurans CFUG	Kathmandu
9.	Training on Facilitation Skill Development organized by District Branch and Concern Group	Kapilvastu
10.	GFG Training Baitadi District FECOFUN	Baitadi
11.	Training on Facilitation Skill Development	Nauwakot
12.	GFG Training to District Branch	Kaski
13.	GFG Training to the District Chapter	Kathmandu
14.	GFG Training to the District Branch	Rupendehi
15.	GFG Training to District Branch	Kavre
16.	GFG Training to Machha narayan Range Post	Kathmandu
17.	GFG Training to District Branch	Kapilvastu
18.	GFG Training to Lapsi Phedhi Range Post	Kathmandu
19.	Concern Group Interaction	Kathmandu
20.	GFG training Nawalparasi District FECOFUN (Nepali and English version)	Nawalparasi
21.	Concern Group Interaction	Kaski
22.	Concern Group Interaction District Branch (Nepali and English version)	Nauwakot
23.	GFG Training to District Branch by Facilitator	Bhaktapur
24.	GFG Training to District Branch by District Chapter	Bhaktapur
25.	Sharing Workshop of GFG with FECOFUN District and WATCH	Rupendehi
26.	CF supporter interaction report WATCH	Kathmandu
27.	Monitoring Report of the GFG Program by SSP (English version)	Kathmandu
28.	Self Assessment and Team Building (English version)	Kathmandu
29.	PSC Meeting Report	Kathmandu
30.	Legal Awareness Training of Nawal Parsi District FECOFUN	Nawalparasi

31.	Self Assessment and Team Building (Nepali version) WATCH	Kathmandu
32.	Self Assessment and Team Building (Nepali version) FECOFUN	Kathmandu
33.	Monitoring Report of the GFG Program by SSP and C Thapa (Nepali version)	Kathmandu
34.	GFG Training to Pipara Range Post	Kapilvastu
35.	Legal Awareness Training to District Branch (English version)	Kaski
36.	GFG Training to District Branch	Nauwakot
37.	GFG Training to District Branch	Kalilali
38.	Legal Awareness Training of District Branch (English and Nepali version)	Kavre
39.	GFG Training Bardia District FECOFUN	Bardia
40.	Constitution of Sukure Khola CF	Nauwakot
41.	Operational Plan of Sukure Khola CF	Nauwakot
42.	Legal Awareness Training Report of District Branch	Nauwakot
43.	Self Assessment and Team Building to District Branch	Bhaktapur
44.	GFG Training to Shishwa Range Post	Kaski
45.	GFG and Model CF Development Training Report of Coordination Committee of Butwal Municipality	Rupendehi
46.	GFG Training to the Shital Nagar Range Post	Rupendehi
47.	GFG Training of Kanchanpur District FECOFUN	Kanchanpur
48.	IGA on Bel Processing	Kapilvastu
49.	Model CFUG Development Training	Kaski
50.	Study Tour for District FECOFUN Chapter	Kathmandu
51.	Self Assessment and Team Building Training, Kapilvastu	Kapilvastu
52.	GFG Program Sharing Meeting, Kathmandu	Kathmandu
53.	Proceeding of Developing a Model CFUG, WATCH	Kathmandu
54.	Proceeding of Institutional GFG, WATCH	Kathmandu
55.	Model CFUG Development Training to District Branch	Kavre
56.	Model CF Development Workshop within Different Districts Community Forest	Kavre
57.	Workshop Report Good Governance Initiatives in FECOFUN 2 nd Review and Follow Up of Activities	Kathmandu
58.	Financial Management Training for Treasurer	
59.	TOT on Managing Conflict of Community Based Forestry Report	Kathmandu
60.	GFG Training to the Surya Binayak Range Post, Bhaktapur	Bhaktapur
61.	District wide CF Stakeholder Assembly on the Occasion of 9 th Established Day of FECOFUN, Dhulikhel	Kavre
62.	Reflection Meeting between Model CF, Patleketh	Kavre
63.	Reflection Meeting among the Implementing Facilitators for Model CFUG, District FECOFUN	Kathmandu
64.	GFG training and Workshop, Seetapayla Range Post Committee Members	Kathmandu
65.	GFG Training and Workshop, Mahadev Stan Range Post Committee Members	Kathmandu
66.	GFG Review and Planning Workshop, Watch Kathmandu	Kathmandu
67.	Financial Management Training, WATCH	Kathmandu
68.	Reflection Program on GFG Program	Kathmandu
69.	Range Post Level GFG Training , SuryaBinayak Range Post, Bhaktapur	Bhaktapur

Annex 4: Budget status as of 30th June 2004 and estimated budget till August 2004 (\$ US)

Budget code	Description of activity	Total Budget	Revised Total Budget	Total Budget Expenditure	Estimated Budget
		Mar03 - Aug04	Mar03 - Aug04	Up to 30 June 2004	July-Aug 2004
Program Dev., Management, Administration and Technical Assistance		165,000.00	165,000.00	140,604.76	44,150.00
460	National strategic facilitator/project coordinator	72,000.00	72,000.00	61,174.00	16,000.00
461	National consultants (through WATCH)	30,000.00	30,000.00	19,391.43	10,500.00
462	Contribution to costs of support staff (through WATCH)	18,000.00	18,000.00	9,174.51	3,000.00
463	Support organizational costs (through WATCH)	22,500.00	22,500.00	16,801.86	6,650.00
464	International consultants (through RECOFTC)	22,500.00	22,500.00	34,062.96	8,000.00
Project Operational Funding (through WATCH and Partners) GOAL 1		90,000.00	87,000.00	38,647.50	34,000.00
465	FECOFUN OD (WATCH, FECOFUN and Partners)	15,000.00	36,000.00	18,740.92	9,000.00
466	VDC & DDC in NRM governance (WATCH and Partners)	30,000.00	7,000.00	4,581.24	-
467	Multi stakeholder forums (WATCH and FECOFUN)	15,000.00	27,000.00	1,127.31	15,000.00
468	CF support network (WATCH)	15,000.00	17,000.00	10,235.22	10,000.00
469	FSCC (WATCH and MoFSC)	15,000.00	-	3,962.81	-
Project Operational Funding (through WATCH and Partners) GOAL 2		72,000.00	74,500.00	16,247.81	31,200.00
470	FUG formation process (WATCH & FECOFUN)	15,000.00	34,000.00	7,975.53	10,000.00
471	Management, monitoring and enterprise development (WATCH and Partners)	15,000.00	5,000.00	1,624.86	1,000.00
472	Facilitation and training skills (through RECOFTC) more effective and relevant forestry curricula at national level	15,000.00	22,500.00 6,000.00	3,983.39 -	4,000.00
473	OD in district and region (through WATCH)	15,000.00	4,000.00	1,791.95	1,200.00
474	OD at national level (through RECOFTC)	12,000.00	3,000.00	872.08	15,000.00
Project Operational Funding (Through WATCH and Partners) GOAL3		40,500.00	41,000.00	16,069.48	17,000.00
475	Strategic analysis	18,000.00	4,000.00	617.17	2,000.00
476	Sharing and adaptation	3,000.00	4,000.00	98.39	5,000.00
477	Effective M&E system	12,000.00	5,000.00	332.05	-
478	Lesson shared	7,500.00	7,000.00	14,908.90	10,000.00
	Useful lessons from other countries tested and adapted	-	13,000.00	112.97	-
	Methodologies for sharing experiences at different levels identified	-	8000	-	-
Sub total for operational funding		367,500.00	367,500.00	211,569.55	126,350.00
RECOFTC Overhead		55,125.00	55,125.00	37,177.16	18,952.50
479	RECOFTC overhead @ 15 per cent	55,125.00	55,125.00	37,177.16	18,952.50
Total Project Cost		422,625.00	422,625.00	248,746.71	
Cash remaining (available) at the end of June 2004				173,878.29	
Additional funds requested (March – August 2004)					145,302.50
Unallocated funds					28,575.79

Post completion expenditure and final reporting costs after 30/08/04 in accordance with the agreement between SDC and RECOFTC (Article 2 point 4)

Annex 5: Persons and organizations consulted/visited

SN	Name and Organization	SN	Name and Organization
1.	Dr. D Parajuli Chief, Foreign Aid Division, MoFSC	21.	Dr Bigyan Acharya Environment and Forestry Program Specialist USAID
2.	Dr. M P Wagle Planning Chief, MoFSC	22.	Mr Peter Neil Project Coordinator LFP
3.	Mr J K Tamrakar Director General , DoF	23.	Mr K B Shrestha Focal Point Officer, TISC, NARMSAP
4.	Dr K Kanel CPFD, DoF	24.	Mr Franz Arens Team Leader, NACRLMP
5.	Mr R P Poudyal RD Western Regional Forest Directorate	25.	Mr J N Koirala DFO Kaski
6.	Mr Amrit lal Joshi Technical Adviser NARMSAP	26.	Ms Kamala Sharma Chairperson HIMAWANTI, Nepal
7.	<u>Forest Action</u> Dr Netra Timsina, Team Leader Mr Mani Ram Banjade	27.	Dr Maksha Ram Maharjan Forestry Sector Coordinator CARE Nepal
8.	Mr Netra Tumbahangphe NORMS	28.	Dr Bharat Pokharel Project Manager, NSCFP
9.	Mr Bhisma Subedi Executive Director ANSAB	29.	Mr Dal Bahadur G C Managing Director NORMS
10.	Mr Biswa Babu Tiwari DFO Rupandehi	30.	Mr Prahlad Krishna Manandhar President C-FORDS
11.	<u>RECOFTC</u> Dr Yam Malla Mr Cor Veer Mr Colin McQuistan Mr Robin aus der Beck	31.	Ms Dibya Gurung National Program Officer SDC
12.	<u>WATCH</u> Dr N K Shrestha Ms Sharmila Shreshtha Mr Ajaya Manandhar	32.	Dr Renate Braun Assistant Country Director SDC
13.	Mr Chiranjibi Pd Upadhyaya Reader Institute of Forestry	33.	Mr Shyam Pd Sharma DFO Bhaktapur

<p>14. FECOFUN Kapilbastu Mr Govinda Poudyal Ms Kamala Poudyal Ms Mala Gotame Mr Rukmagat Pant Mr Humnath Bhattarai Mr Om Lal Giri Ms Sonia Tharu Ms Dev Kala B K (facilitator)</p>	<p>34. Environment and Natural Resource Concern Group, Bhaktapur Mr Ukesh Raj Bhujju, Nepal Heritage Society Mr Krishna Gobinda Khoyeju, Association of Forest Based Industry Mr Makunda Ranjit, Program Officer Mr Shyam Pd Sharma, DFO Bhaktapur Mr Loknath Ghimire, Ranger, Bhaktapur</p>
<p>15. Regional Forest Office, Pokhara Mr Bijay Raj Poudyal, Training officer, RFTC Mr Bal Bdr Shahi, NRPO-CF Mr M R Adhikari, NRPO-IM Mr Rajendra Sharma, Ranger Mr Babu Ram Upreti, Ranger Mr Mohan Shakya, Ranger Ms Kalpana Aryal, NRPO-GFE Mr Kedar Baral, Ranger Mr Joni Lal Hirachan, Ranger Mr Rameshwor Pandit, NRPO-SC Mr R M S Bhandari, TIO Mr Prem Khanal, AFO, Kaski Mr Laxam Satyal, RMEO Mr Mahadip Pokharel, Ranger</p>	<p>35. FECOFUN Kaski Mr Kalidas Subedi Mr Sundar Biswakarma (Facilitator) Mr Rudra Bhahadur Khadka Mr Chudamani Timilsina Mr Sunmaya Nepali (Facilitator) Mr Kopila K.C (Facilitator) Mr Lila Nath Adhikari Mr Deepak Adhikari (Facilitator) Mr Homnath Gautam Mr Shankar Bahadur K.C Mr Goma Gurung Mr Bishwa Bandhu Neupane</p>
<p>16. FECOFUN Bhaktapur Mr Kedar Khadka Ms Manju Thapa Ms Sabita Ghimire Mr Rameshwor Bohora Ms Radhika Adhikari Ms Bhawani Mahat Mr Bidha Khatri Mr Sahadev Neupane Ms Chitrakumari Acharya Ms Maidevi Pariyar Mr Ramesh Bahadur Shrestha Mr Shekhar Thapa Mr Rameshwor Thapa</p>	<p>36. FECOFUN Kavre Mr Major man Thing Ms Chitra Kumari Acharya Ms Ujeli Kumari Yauba Mr Larim Gautam Ms Goma Gautam Mr Indra Bdr Tamang Mr Guman Dhoj Kuwar Mr HARI Ram Sapkota Mr Keshav Badal Mr Sanubhai Bista Ms Subhadra Pyakurel Ms Maiya Khadka Ms Santa Neupane Ms Sarita Sapkota</p>
<p>17. Journalists in Butwal Mr Chhabi Panday, Jana Sangharsha Daily Mr Kulmani Gyawali, Samacharpatra Mr D R Ghimire, Mechi-Kali Sandesh Mr Bhawani Pd Pande, Nepal Env Journalist Association Jhaduwamai FUG, Kapilbastu Ms Rajni Chaudhari Ms Laxmi Chaudhari Ms Ram Kumar Bhar</p>	<p>37. Central FECOFUN, Kathmandu Mr Bhim Pd Shreshtha, Chairman Ms Apsara Chapagain, VC Mr Bhola Bhattarai, Secretary Mr Rajendra Lamichhane, Member Mr Hari Pd Neupane, Ex Chairman Mr Rana Bd Thapa, Member Mr Hitlal Shreshtha, Member Ms Lakshmi Poudel, Treasurer Mr Ganesh Karki, Member</p>

<p>18. FECOFUN Rupandehi Ms Him Kumari Mr Sanjeev Kumar Rawal (Facilitator) Ms Sabitra Regmi, (Facilitator) Ms Dibya L Rajbhandari (Facilitator) Mr Narayan Bhattarai</p>	<p>38. Prativa FUG Mr Sukhbir Sinjali Mr Jang Bahadur Yadav Nuis Thapa <u>Koilichaur FUG, Kapilbastu</u> Ms Indra Aryal Mr Narayan Giri</p>
<p>19. <u>Community Forestry Supporter Network</u> Mr Bhola Khatiwada Mr Binod Kumar Singh Mr Gyan Bdr Gurung</p>	<p>39. <u>Livelihoods and Forestry Project, Terai</u> Mr Bishnu Tripathi Mr Udaya Poudyal Mr Ramesh Maskey</p>
<p>20. <u>6 FUG members of FUG coordination committee at Butwal.</u> <u>35 members of Balkumari FUG in Bhaktapur</u> 14 members of Samaymai FUG of Rupandehi <u>25 members of Kapileshwor FUG of Kavre</u> 40 members of Bumipujne FUG of Kaski</p>	<p>40. <u>Environment and Natural Resources Concern Group-Central</u> Mr Khem Raj Parajuli, Central Chirman Mr Ram Pd Gaire, Member Mr Udaya Bohara, Central Secretary <u>Siddhathartha FUG, Kapilbastu</u> Mr Jaleshwar Chaudhari</p>
<p><u>List of people who participated in the debriefing meeting held on 20 August 2004</u></p>	
<p>Mr Ajaya Vikram Manandhar, WATCH Mr Amrit Lal Joshi, NARMSAP Mr Bhim Prasad Shrestha, FECOFUN Center Mr Bhola Khatiwada, COFSUN Mr Chup Bahadur Thapa, FECOFUN Center Mr Colin Mcquinstan , RECOFTC Mr Dal Bahadur G.C. NORMS Mr Dhruva Prasad Acharya, Consultant Mr Dinesh Paudel, NSCFP Mr Ghan Shyam Pandey, FECOFUN Center Mr Guman Dhoj Kunwar, FECOFUN, Kavre Mr Krishna Bahadur Shrestha, NARMSAP Mr Netra Tambahangphe, NORMS Mr Parbat Gurung, NARECOG Mr Peter Neil, LFP Mr Rajendra Lamichhane, CARE, Nepal Mr Rameshwar Bohara, FECOFUN, Bhaktapur</p>	<p>Mr Robin Aus der Beek, RECOFTC Mr Surya Binayee, ANSAB Ms Bhawani Mahat, FECOFUN, Bhaktapur Ms Kamala Sharma, Himawanti, Nepal Ms Laxmi Paudel, FECOFUN Center Ms Marilyn D. Hoskins, Consultant Ms Renate Braun, SDC Ms Apsara Chapagain, FECOFUN Center Ms Punam Thapa, WATCH Ms Sarmila Shrestha, WATCH Dr Bharat Kumar Pokhrel, NSCFP Dr Frans Arentz, NACRMLP Dr Keshav Raj Kanel, Department of Forests Dr Maksha Ram Maharjan, CARE, Nepal Dr Narayan Kaji Shrestha, WATCH Dr Netra Timsina, Forest Action</p>