

Poverty reduction through forestry-related activities in Asia

Experience from IFAD funded Leasehold Forestry and Livestock Program, Nepal

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Department of Forests, Government of Nepal

Leasehold Forestry and Livestock Program, Nepal

Introduction

- Leasehold Forestry and Livestock Program (LFLP) of Nepal is the translation of livelihood improvement approach through leasehold forestry into practice.
- Leasehold forestry approach involves handing over of low stocked or degraded forest patches as leasehold forest to the groups of households living below poverty line in hills.
- The leasehold forests are managed in order to supply forage/fodder in support of improved livestock farming and rejuvenate the environmental condition along with crop diversification for income generation.
- The program is funded by IFAD and Government of Nepal.

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Introduction

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Program Goal and Objectives:

- Sustained poverty reduction and environment conservation
- To raise the income and living condition of poor families living below poverty line in 22 hill districts
- To improve the ecological condition in hills

Target groups/Coverage:

44,300 HHs living below poverty line in 22 hill districts with 29% coverage of country from east to west




People below poverty line from different ethnic groups

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Program Approach

Coordination Approach

- The program is being implemented in regular basis by joint effort of Forest and Livestock Departments of Government of Nepal
- Department of Forests (DoF) involves in leasehold group formation; leasing forest patches to leasehold groups; Forage/Fodder based forest and land management; and forest based income generating activities
- Department of Livestock Services involves in goat procurement; animal health services; Improved Livestock Farming; Forage production
- Procurement of Service Providers to grant Social Mobilization and Rural Finance Services to the leaseholders




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Working Mechanism

Capital Formation:

- Formation of groups, Inter-groups and Cooperatives in different stages
- Leasehold Forest Plots are handed-over to the group of poor families for 40 years where they can cultivate forest products to fulfill the needs of household subsistence and income by conserving the environment
- Capital Formation by Saving and Credit through Rural Finance System and goat procurement to the leasee




Saving and Credit group- Capacity Building

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Working Mechanism

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Capacity Building:

- **On-Farm Training to Users:** Leaseland Development and Management, Nursery Management, Agro-Forestry practices, NTFP & Plantation Management
- **Goat Farming :** Improved animal husbandry and Animal Health
- **Social mobilization** (gender mainstreaming, empowerment),
- **Technology transfer**

Land Development Practice



Goat Farming



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Achievement

- 19,141 ha. Degraded forest patches are under the leasehold management system benefiting to 3,520 groups of 29,888 families
- 221 Multi-purpose nurseries have been established by leaseholders to produce about 442,000 seedlings
- Poor Leaseholders are engaged in income diversification through different kinds of income generating activities e.g. NTFP cultivation, bee keeping etc.
- Soil conservation
- 5,592 Goats and Bucks are distributed to leaseholders
- 55 Village Livestock Assistance/ Village Animal Health Workers are trained



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Impacts

Environmental :




- Forest Cover Restoration by 50% and Biodiversity increase in Leasehold Forests
- Improvement in Soil Erosion Control

Societal/Livelihoods :

- Increase in Food security by 16% /month/person
- Reduction in drudgery of fodder/fuelwood collection by 2.5 hrs. per/day/family
- Increase in number of school goers
- Increased supply of forest products
- Empowerment (increase in women's decision making by 25%)


Economic:

- Increase in Cash income from livestock farming and other income generating activities
- >25% of Saving is invested in productive works

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Challenges

- Harmonizing Leasehold Forestry for Poor with other forestry options requires incessant efforts due to spatial, temporal and financial overlapping of different modes of Forest Management
- Maintaining institutional and financial sustainability of program is risky due to the very nature of leasehold groups as being small (5-15 HHs) and chained by acute poverty
- Bringing all the development partners toward a common program of poverty reduction is an Herculean task due to it's complexity in nature

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Way Forward

- Effective Landuse Planning should be reflected in Policy
- Empowerment of poor leasehold groups by federating and encouraging their involvement on right based approach
- Enabling Leaseholders toward entrepreneurship development through business planning, market linkage and increased investment for long-term economic benefit and sustainable livelihood

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Thank You!



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