

Author: Charla Britt

Affiliation: PhD Candidate; Department of Rural Sociology, Cornell University
Visiting Scholar; Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis
Indiana University

Address: 513 N. Park, Bloomington, IN 47408

Fax No.: (812) 955-3150 Emails: cb43@cornell.edu or cbritt@indiana.edu

Title: Community Forestry Comes of Age: Forest-User Networking and Federation-Building Experiences from Nepal

Stream: Forestry

Discipline: Development Sociology

Contestation over access to and control over resources has characterized relations between the state and local people in many parts of the world. This is particularly evident in the forestry sector where, in many countries, the state, local people and other stakeholders have acted out tensions in the arena of the forest, with deforestation resulting from “conflict, confrontation, and resistance” (Peluso 1992). Most Forest Departments or land management agencies promote management regimes which privilege production (or industrial) forestry managed by agents of the state or multinational corporations over locally-derived or customary forms of forest management. This trend is intensifying under free trade institutions (such as GATT, NAFTA, and others), which facilitate the entry of multinationals into new countries and markets. In both the North and the South, forest-dependent communities are experiencing negative impacts from industrial forestry. Some groups or communities, however, are responding.

Stakeholders are forming networks and regional or national federations, in order to broaden their representative base and establish a credible collective-voice for negotiating reforms in legislation and the institutional structures regulating access to and control over forest resources. As forest-dependent communities worldwide seek new-old institutional solutions for managing forest resources, the example of Nepal is particularly instructive. While most countries were busy legislating common property regimes out of existence (McKean and Ostrom 1995), Nepal was promoting and instituting community forestry as a central strategy of national forestry policy. Community forests are being carved out of national forest areas all across the country -- with 100 percent of these forest benefits reaching at least an estimated 3.5 million rural-based Nepalese. Furthermore, forest-user networks and the recent formation of a national federation of forest user groups are beginning to influence the character and directional-flow of local-center interactions -- creating new pathways for seeking accountability, gaining access to officials, and influencing policy. In this newly democratic geographically-challenged country, these links are going a long way towards establishing more democratic spaces, with broader-based information-sharing and decision-making, and changes in the protocol between forest users and agents of the state.

This paper looks at factors influencing forest management transformations in Nepal. It describes, in particular, different phases of state-sponsored community forestry in Nepal, and recent developments of forest-user networking and the creation of the *Sammudaik Ban Upabhokta Mahasangh* or the Federation of Community Forestry Users in Nepal (FECOFUN).

Following a discussion on farm-forest links in farming systems and property rights, forest policy and factors leading to state-sponsored community forestry are reviewed. Community forestry is outlined as a negotiated endeavor between center and periphery concerns, and as a response to contested claims about the causes and consequences of deforestation in the Himalaya. Changes in policy and praxis are situated in relation to political opportunity spaces and perceptions of environmental contingencies.

Emerging trends in networking and federation-building are also identified by elaborating on general characteristics and pertinent “trigger issues.” Networking, as a mechanism for transferring information between groups and individuals, is hardly new. However, the nature of emerging forest-user networks in Nepal -- who is involved, how and where, the type of information shared, and the scale or scope -- is, I would argue, new and significant. FECOFUN, the most tangible outgrowth of forest-user networking, is analyzed in terms of its mandate and organizational profile, its local and policy-level activities, and forest-user and other people’s perceptions of the organization. Over a two year period I worked collaboratively with members of FECOFUN, based on the principles of participatory action research (PAR). Since its inception in March of 1996, this Federation has been instrumental in advocating for forest-user rights, disseminating information about community forestry, and in mediating conflicts between community forestry user groups, the Forest Department and forest users, and a multinational forestry company and local people.

Why are forest-dependent communities choosing to come together and create catalytic organizations at this particular juncture? What combination of conditions facilitates the scaling-up or mobilization of forest-dependent groups into broader-based institutions? What impacts do networks or FECOFUN appear to be having on local institutions, conflict resolution, and resource-management regimes? This paper attempts to shed light on these questions by situating emerging practical political expressions of forest-users within an analysis of the political ecology of forest management in Nepal.

Geography, Economy, and Farming Systems

Situated on the southern flank of the Central Himalaya, Nepal is a landlocked country, 835 kilometers long and between 90 to 230 kilometers wide, covering a total land area of 147,181 square kilometers. Nepal is positioned between India and China, with Tibet to its north and India to its south, west, and east. About 80 percent of the land area is hilly and mountainous, with the remaining 20 percent comprising a tropical lowland area along the southern Nepal-India border, known as the Terai. From south to north Nepal’s landforms rise in successive hill and mountain ranges, punctuated by fertile alluvial valleys and bisected by major river (drainage) systems.

Nepal is home to over 22 million people. The population growth rate is about 2.5 percent per year. The United Nations ranks the country as one of the least developed countries in the world. The per capita annual income is \$210 (UNDP 1998). An estimated 70 percent of Nepal’s national budget comes from foreign assistance (Lundberg 1997:2). The Nepalese economy is fragmented into what has been referred to as “pocket economies” (Shrestha and Jain 1977). In the last 40 years successive development plans have prioritized the construction of roads in order to integrate these localized economies into a broader national economic system. Particularly in the last decade, the total amount of motorable roads has increased significantly. But, beyond an extensive network of footpaths and a good number of short-landing airstrips, there is little

infrastructure that reliably links villages and bazaars in the Hills, or the Hills with the Terai or China and India. Telephones remain rare outside of urban centers. Most villages and about 20 of the 75 administrative district centers cannot be reached by motorable roads.

Farming remains the dominant occupation in Nepal. According to the latest census figures, 81.2 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture. Small-scale farms are the norm. The average farm is 0.5 hectares in the Middle Hills and about 1.5 hectares in the Terai. While these farm sizes may seem small, landlessness or near-landlessness and inequality in landholdings reduce these averaged amounts even further for the majority of the population. Forty-three percent of peasants are landless or nearly-landless (meaning with 0.0 to 0.5 hectares). Outside of agriculture, there are few opportunities for reliable employment. The secondary sector -- manufacturing, construction, and mining -- accounts for just 2.6 percent of employment.

Especially in the Middle Hills, agriculture depends greatly on forest inputs. Farming is based on an interactive system where cropping patterns, animal husbandry and forest products are combined. Outsloping terrace construction enables extensive cultivation even on steeply-sloped terrain, but due to the thin layer of topsoil found on the mostly rainfed, non-alluvial fields, moisture can be retained and yields sustained only through the application of a compost composed of humus and dung. A primary element in this cycle of resource generation and use, is a healthy forest. Forests provide green leaves, which feed the livestock, and the fallen dry leaves, which are used as animal bedding. Dung from the animals mixed with the dry leaves used as bedding, create a compost rich enough in moisture-retaining humus for hill agricultural needs. Given the top-soil nutrient requirements in the Middle Hills, most farmers are as dependent for their subsistence on uncultivated lands (generally forests and pastures) as they are on cultivated areas, making forest management all the more crucial.

Political Unification and Property Rights

The mid-eighteenth century marks the beginning of Nepal's political unification and its modern history (Brown 1996). Before this period what we now refer to as Nepal was composed of autonomous mini-states. This changed when Prithvi Narayan Shah unified modern Nepal after a series of military campaigns spanning three decades. At the height of expansionist glory, the boundaries of Nepal stretched from Sikkim to the Kangra Valley.

In many areas property rights were largely communal prior to the arrival of Indo-Aryan groups (1000 to 2000 years ago). Associations between individuals were based on kinship and community alliances (Caplan 1970). Landholdings were collectively owned according to a property rights system known as *kipat*. This system took into consideration issues of fairness and equity, by balancing family needs and communal responsibility. *Kipat* was gradually eroded by the farming technologies and the caste-structured social institutions brought with Indo-Aryan immigrants (Poffenberger 1976). Common lands, comprising mostly forested areas, continued to be regulated through customary rules for protection and use. But cultivation took on more privatized or permanent features, with the construction of terraced fields and defined inheritance rights.

Political unification and territorial expansion necessitated the formation and maintenance of service organizations -- administrative, bureaucratic, and military. In Nepal there were few sources for revenue other than land. As a result the state financed its administrative structure and military operations through land grants and assignments, known as *birta* and *jagir*. Over time large areas were appropriated as rewards to civil and military officials, members of the nobility,

chieftains who conquered principalities, and others. These grants had the effect of securing loyalty through favoritism and cooptation; they led to the formation of a landed aristocracy and absentee landlordism (Regmi 1971; Shrestha 1990). Under *birta* and *jagir* landholders were provided superior title and monopoly over the land by virtue of royal sanction. They used tenant peasants to cultivate their lands, and routinely required higher rents and production shares than were stipulated by the government.

In 1846 political power passed from the Shah Dynasty to Jang Bahadur Kunwar (who later changed his name to Rana). Jang Bahadur became prime minister and commander-in-chief. He established hereditary Rana family rule. The monarchy was sequestered as a figurehead institution (English 1985). The Ranas continued with the Shah Dynasty's methods of appropriating surplus through taxation and tributary relations. The Rana Regime, however, granted privileges mostly to those of Rana lineage. By the end of the nineteenth century an estimated 25 percent of all income-yielding lands were controlled by Ranas (Regmi 1988). This figure increased to 75 percent by 1950 (Regmi 1978).

In 1951, the Shahs were restored as monarchs. King Tribhuvan's rule from 1951 to 1955 was characterized by internal power struggles. When his son, Mahendra, became King he reluctantly experimented with a multiparty system, permitting general elections in 1959. Concerned about his declining political leverage and claiming that the elected government was filled with 'anti-national elements', Mahendra arrested members of the Cabinet in December 1960 (Brown 1996:36-37). A constitution promulgated in 1962 established representation only through a "partyless" *panchayat* system.

Following a period of violent civil unrest in the spring of 1990 Mahendra's son, King Birendra (who had ruled since 1972), agreed to abandon the *panchayat* system, allow political parties, and accept constitutional limits on his power. A new constitution was formed in 1990, with elections first held in May 1991. Since 1991 there have been numerous changes in government, and increasing frustration with the political process. Some people argue that democratic Nepal is little different from *panchayat* Nepal (Brown 1996:222). This assessment, however, discounts gains that are slowly being made through a free press and other broader-based developments supporting civil society.

Forests and Forest Policy

In Nepal a system of forest administration barely existed until the 1950s (Mahat, Griffin, and Sheperd 1986). Though forests technically "belonged" to the State, wooded areas were officially placed under government protection and control only in 1957, with the passage of the Private Forest Nationalization Act. There are different perspectives on the objectives and results of this act. Some people argue that the real purpose of the Act was to reduce the area of land controlled by cronies of the Rana regime (Joshi 1989; Gilmour and Fisher 1991). Others claim that this usurpation of forest area by the government led to widespread felling (Bajracharya 1983; FAO/World Bank 1979). Gilmour and Fisher (1991) note that there may have been a crisis about 1950, with the instability that followed the collapse of the Rana regime, but it is doubtful that the Nationalization caused widespread or unusual amounts of deforestation. Mostly, rural residents remained unaware of the Act (Carter 1992; Karan and Ishii 1996). Forest Acts in 1961 and 1967 defined forest categories and methods for describing, registering, and demarcating forest area. Operationally, however, these provisions were largely unenforceable.

The Forest Department was unable to effectively manage, monitor or protect the vast tracts of national forests.

Customary forest management regimes have thus *de facto* operated either in conflict with or parallel to official government policies. Because government intervention capacity remained limited, customary practices continued in many areas. Studies suggest that these systems vary regionally (north to south, and west to east) in relation to climatic variations, mountain ecology, forest composition, the ethnic groups involved, and the size function and rules for regulating use. Customary systems included agreements for protection, regulation of access, silvicultural practices, and the distribution of forest products. (Fisher 1989; Gilmour 1990; Messerschmidt 1986; Campbell, Shrestha and Euphrat 1987).

The “Naive Phase”: Community Forestry Policy Detached from Praxis

Starting in the 1970s, projections of massive declines in Himalayan forest cover incited worldwide concern. While initial estimates have proved wrong, debates about the condition of Nepal’s forests, and the causes and consequences of deforestation continue (Bajracharya 1983; Eckholm 1975; Hamilton 1987; Ives 1987, 1991; Ives and Messerli 1989; Metz 1991; World Bank 1978). Multiple anthropogenic activities have contributed to conditions of forest cover in the Himalaya. Studies indicate, however, that deforestation in the Nepalese Hills is neither as recent nor as widespread as previously implied. Many Middle Hill forests were reduced to their present boundaries between 1750 and 1900 as a result of *jagir* and *birta* land tenures which, as already mentioned, encouraged the conversion of forests into agricultural holdings in order to extract maximum land rents from peasant cultivators (Mahat, Griffin and Shepherd 1986). While some forests have declined in density, other forests are in better condition than before. In many areas, moreover, there is evidence indicating a substantial increase in the number of trees planted on private land.

Concern about the condition of Himalayan forests and broader environmental concerns have provided (and continue to provide) a charter for governments and international agencies working in Nepal, influencing and otherwise shaping forest-related policies since the mid-1970s. Important changes in forest legislation began in response to: (a) the National Forestry Conference held in Kathmandu in 1975, (b) the findings of “A Task Force on Land Use and Erosion Control” (National Planning Commission 1974), and (c) eco-doom reports by Eckholm (1975) and the World Bank (1978). These nearly simultaneous occurrences served to focus national and international attention on forests and deforestation. The resulting discourse was instrumental to the creation of the 1976 National Forestry Plan and the type of state-sponsored community forestry which was officially adopted at that time.

The National Forestry Plan offered provisions for handing-over limited areas of government land to village *panchayats*, with technical assistance provided by the Forest Department. However, the “community” component of community forestry remained absent. Up to 125 hectares of severely degraded (often totally deforested) land could be “handed-over” to the local *panchayat* leaders (*pradhAn pancha*) for planting and protecting seedlings under the supervision of the District Forest Officer. The emphasis was on planting and protection. Nurseries were built, plantations were established, forest watchers were hired, and barbed-wired fencing was used to enclose areas.

This attempt at community forestry did not appeal to local people, and the lack of enthusiasm showed. Early studies indicated that community forestry was being imposed and that

there was very little information about the policy. For example, a 1985 survey in Dolakha District of 419 chairpersons revealed that most of them did not know if they were members of a community forest committee or what they were expected to do. By 1986 (approximately 10 years on), a measly 48,541 hectares of forests had been handed-over as community forests to *panchayats*, despite intensive inputs from FAO, the World Bank, and bi-lateral projects.

In this stage, community forestry existed mainly in its rhetoric. It was a “naive phase,” with nurseries and plantations being established through the “help” of local labor at the expense of institutional development and real participation. Convincing Forest Department staff and other stakeholders to “let go” or otherwise hand-over forests (both benefits as well as responsibilities) to local people was a tentative, experiential, and dialogical process.

Approaching Adolescence: Community Forestry Policy Mediated by Praxis

Starting in the mid-1980s small-scale pilot projects were used to demonstrate local people’s capacity for both protecting and managing forest resources. New forms of extension were experimented with in Dolakha and Sindhu Palanchowk Districts; and attitudinal reorientation trainings of Forest Department staff -- away from “policing” -- were initiated in Dhankuta District. Consultants working through bi-lateral projects in conjunction with Forest Department staff, primarily rangers, tested these ideas. The individuals involved, and the projects they represented, were in a better position to take risks and experiment with resource-management partnerships. If an activity was not successful, it was discarded. However, if it proved successful, it was replicated (Gronow 1987; Gronow and Shrestha 1988; Gronow and Shrestha 1991).

Only in the late 1980s were contradictions in community forestry-related policy and local-level applications mediated through changes in policy. In 1988 participants of the first Community Forestry Conference pointed-out the limited role that local people were playing in community forestry. Reality-checked by the success of the pilot-projects, the management capabilities of local people started to be taken seriously by a larger circle of bureaucrats, politicians, and donors. Key individuals were convinced that further devolution was necessary to improve forest management and resolve conflicts between local-level concerns and *panchayat*-based applications in policy. The “user group” concept began to be recognized.

In this same period the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (in consultation with FINNIDA) was preparing the “Master Plan for the Forestry Sector”. Though mostly confined to Kathmandu-based stakeholders, drafts of the Master Plan were made available for public scrutiny. There were over 100 revisions and numerous reincarnations of this 13 volume document. The Master Plan (1990) eventually recommended: no ceiling on the area of forest handed-over; that forests should be handed-over to “user groups” (not *panchayats*); that all the benefits from the forest should remain with the user group; that women and the poor should be involved in the management of community forests; and, that the process of handing-over forests should be expedited. Under the Master Plan, forest user groups were identified as the appropriate local institution responsible for the protection, development, and sustainable utilization of local forests. And, community and private forestry were classified as the highest priority programs for the forestry sector in Nepal.

The Forest Act of 1993 and the Forest Regulations framed in 1995 have reaffirmed the Nepalese government’s position for assigning more autonomy to forest user groups as self-

governing institutions with rights to acquire, transfer, and sell forest products. These provisions have meant that while the basic objective of community forestry remains the fulfilment of subsistence needs for local people, user groups can also legally cultivate non-timber forest products and perennial cash crops, as well as commercially process forest products for sale. Natural as well as degraded forest areas are handed-over to user groups, with 100 percent of the benefits accrued to the forest-users and the user group fund. These funds are controlled by user groups and can be used for the development of the community forest or community development activities.

Community forest land remains the property right of the Nepalese government. The user group is not allowed to sell the land or hand-over the forest to another user group. Forest user group members have usufruct rights, they can exclude outsiders, and they have autonomy in management practices and the collection and sale of forest products, but they do not “own” or otherwise have title to the land. While it could be argued that this makes community forests only nominally user group property, most forest users consider these forests as their collective property. The refrain “*hamro ban*” (our forest) is common when local users speak about or refer to their community forest.

Reflections on the User Group Concept

Community forests in Nepal are handed-over to forest users who are mutually-recognized collectors of a particular area of forest. There are no restrictions based on village, ward, or district boundaries. Furthermore, in recognition of the fact that collection patterns are not usually limited to one forest area, forest users can be members in multiple forest user groups -- becoming, in effect, primary, secondary and tertiary users.

A central component of the user group concept has been the development of a user-group formation process. Forest users are identified and initially informed about their legislative rights and responsibilities (so that they are in a better position to decide whether they want to be user group members). The idea is to start with house-to-house visits. Different kinds of users -- especially, women as well as poorer, landless, marginalized and low-caste users -- then meet in small groups in order to more freely discuss issues. Following formation, rules for collection and use are decided among user group members. Sanctions and approaches to monitoring and enforcing rules differ depending on size and quality of forest, number of user group members, collection patterns, and preferred forest products. Outsiders are always prohibited, but methods for deterring encroachment vary. Constitutions and operational management plans are worked-out in conjunction with Forest Department staff, usually rangers, in *Amsabhas* (assemblies) and later approved by district forest officers. All agreements are mainly reached by consensus. Forest user groups have committees, which meet monthly. Depending on the rules of the group, assemblies usually occur once or twice a year.

Forest user groups are, in some ways, very young institutions. However, in other ways, they represent older institutional forms. Many user groups are building on local customary property rights and management forms. Based on respondent accounts, there are increasing signs of maturation in user group institutions. Examples include changes in leadership and the use of assemblies. Initially one forest user group assembly per year was the norm. More recently, however, more and more user groups are calling assemblies twice a year and, on demand, as deemed necessary. Forest user group chairpersons and committee members are also under increasing pressure to be more transparent about all interactions, discussions, and the use of user

group funds. When this is not done to user group member satisfaction, committee members have been asked to resign.

Esman (1991) aptly comments that where local initiatives have been stifled for long periods of time, grassroots responses will not effortlessly surface simply because a government has started urging local institutions to be more active. Community forestry is “taking off” in many ways, but there are problems. User group performance is uneven. Where insufficient attention has been paid to identifying users and informing them of their rights and responsibilities, some traditional users have been excluded and local elite interests sometimes dominate decision-making (Graner 1996; Hopley 1990; Chhetri and Pandey 1992). In other instances, the situation within user groups is more akin to “committee forestry” rather than community forestry -- with decisions being made and enforced only by committee members. Furthermore, the marginalization of women, low or untouchable castes, and the poor, and a lack of knowledge about legislative and forest user(s) rights remain much too prevalent.

Since the introduction of the user group concept as the operative forest management institution (in 1989), demand for community forest user group formation and registration has been increasing. According to the latest official records from the Forest Department (December 1997), 400,719 hectares of forest have been handed-over to 6,022 forest user groups, benefiting 639,971 households. Although impossible to confirm, unofficial estimates are higher, suggesting up to another 6,000 more functioning user groups waiting for official registration (G. Kafle, pers. comm. August 1996; Department of Forest sources, January 1998).

Community forestry, following changes in policy and approach, is gradually being “owned” and appropriated by forest users who see the policy as favoring user group interests in retaining or gaining access to and control over local forest resources. Forest users want the demarcation and usufruct guarantees granted by forest user group registration and codified in the Forest Act 1993 and Regulations 1995. With the number of forest user groups expanding, and changes in policies influencing the scope of management objectives, there is an increasing need for forming broader-based institutional structures which can operate more effectively at multiple levels. It is in this context that networking between forest users is expanding, with a national federation being formed.

Research Methodology

This research was conducted from late January 1996 to mid-March 1998. For the bulk of this period, I worked with members of FECOFUN, basing the research approach on the principles of participatory action research (PAR). PAR recognizes research as a process wherein researchers operate as collaborators with members of organizations in studying and transforming those organizations (Greenwood, Whyte, and Harkavy 1993). The main research activities centered around issues identified by steering committee members of FECOFUN, and were designed in a way that attempted to include organizational members into a regular and meaningful dialogue.

Supporting data were collected through informational and networking meetings, organizational material and outputs, minutes of committee and local meetings, semi-structured discussions, and participant observation. A process documentation approach was used to track changes -- cross-checking through and drawing on different sources of information and different approaches to recording and analyzing outputs. Decisions taken, methods of decision-making, and types of discourse are presently being coded and analyzed by reviewing minutes of

committee meetings and notes on other types of meetings or informal “get togethers” as a way of putting text and other comments and observations into context.

A case-study approach and semi-structured interviews formed the core of the district-level research, but these were modified to meet organizational needs and to highlight monitoring and evaluation components. Twelve research assistants were hired to document (in an exploratory and aggregate sense) district-based networking activities (or not). Half of them were members of the Federation. In the beginning an 8-day intensive training (5 days in Kathmandu, 3 days in a village) for the researchers was facilitated by Steering Committee members of FECOFUN and Nepalese community forestry professionals who volunteered their time. Over a five-month period of time the research assistants worked mostly in groups of two, undertaking research in 27 different districts. They were expected to get a sense of people's impressions of changes brought about (or not) through networking and to document expectations of and awareness about the Federation. The research assistants also gave information about the Federation and community forestry policies. Steering Committee members referred to this part of the research process as *hAmro anusandhAn* -- “our research.”

All interactions were conducted in Nepali. Every month we met in Kathmandu for two or three days to discuss findings and outcomes. Locally available brochures and other written information about the ward, district, or region were collected. Day-by-day diary accounts and monthly reports were also written. These materials were later given to the Federation as reference files. At the end of the research period, a four-day workshop was organized to further discuss, highlight, and analyze experiences. All get-togethers were held at the FECOFUN central office in Kathmandu and attended by Steering Committee members who responded to and frequently took notes based on the discussions and information provided. Different Nepalese community forestry professionals also helped facilitate discussions at these meetings, and provide a basis for comparison grounded in their own substantial field-based experiences with community forestry and forest-user networking. The information gathered from this phase of the research is being coded and analyzed based on criteria for understanding the importance or “utility” of connections, and indicators for analyzing the impact of information in network exchanges. This will be cross-correlated and later compared with the more in-depth case-study work conducted in Dhankuta District (discussed below).

In addition to monitoring and coordinating the research assistant studies, I undertook more in-depth case-study research in eastern Nepal, mostly in Dhankuta District. In this the intention was to understand the narratives that explain change in terms of the major players and their roles, as well as why links are established and how they perform. Initial questions focused on locally-meaningful indicators of change. Further questions looked at actors -- who's involved and why, where their sources of knowledge are, how the information has circulated, who controls the lines of communication, and what has been the impact of these exchanges (Ramirez 1997; FAO 1995).

PAR was used to embed the study within the internal machinations and workings of FECOFUN in order to get a better, a more complete understanding of interactions and perspectives, and to create a collaborative environment for feedback, skill development, and extension. This kind of engagement in a research project and with research “subjects” is contrary to the normal science mode of research, which is taught as a step-by-step endeavor of theory building, hypothesis generation, and subsequent testing. My purpose here is not to dwell on the nuances of this debate, but to briefly suggest some of the ways in which PAR is a more

useful and scientific methodology for studying people and organizations, and analyzing both inputs and outputs.

Conventional research models treat organizations or communities as passive subjects who are allowed limited opportunity to check facts, respond to misconceptions, and offer alternative explanations. In contrast, a PAR process forces a rigorous checking and rechecking of information, as the researcher is continually challenged by events, ideas, and arguments posed by research-collaborators who also happen to have the most firsthand knowledge. Instead of beginning with a set of hypotheses and targeting an organization or community in which to test these, the research process emerges out of a mutual effort -- discovering and diagnosing problems, and drawing upon literature and experiences as complexities start to be better understood. This requires attention to the shifting sands of factual details and allows an openness to ideas -- new ways of observing, conceptualizing, and measuring important variables (Whyte, Greenwood, and Lazes 1991).

A mixture of methods and research approaches have been employed in this study, ranging from more traditional case-study research to PAR. However, of course, applying these methods in practice encouraged different levels of collaboration and different degrees of involvement by various actors. While the underlying principle of the research process remained PAR, creating a PAR environment in an organization as large, diverse, and dispersed as the Federation was not easy and required compromises. Not all members of the Federation were involved. And, even with those individuals who were involved, optimum levels of participation and collaboration were not always achieved. Participation frequently corresponded with the finite levels of energy and inputs available at any particular time and in relation to different activities.

Forest-User Networking

In Nepal, early forest-user networks took shape around the expressed interest of forest users to better understand the situation of other forest users, and the need for support-providers, such as I/NGOs and bi-lateral donors, to help resolve differences between forest users, Forest Department staff, line-agencies, and/or policy-makers. The issues discussed initially centered on locally pertinent issues, with solutions realized through locally available human and natural resources. Increasingly, however, forest-user exchanges are focusing on efforts to influence government policies, and problems with forestry policy implementation.

Most forest-user exchanges remain informal. However, more formal arrangements are becoming embedded in broader-based institutions and federated structures. Some characteristic aspects of emerging forest-user networks include:

- Most networks are ad hoc.
- By creating a sense of connection, networks are helping to establish mutual support strategies and “multiplier-effects.”
- Formal network arrangements tend to be embedded in federated structures or organizations -- such as, Department of Forests, projects, NGOs and/or, in the case of Nepal, FECOFUN -- which organize and support regular exchanges.
- Where networks are established, planning procedures are enhanced.
- Networks which emphasize collective action are effecting changes, such as:
 - (a) Broader-based information-sharing and decision-making (within forest user groups)

- (b) Increased accountability and transparency (within forest user groups and between user groups and the Forest Department)
- (c) Better formation and post-formation support from the Forest Department for forest user groups
- (d) The development of mechanisms for locally mediating conflicts (inclusive of forest users, members of FECOFUN, and Forest Department staff)
- Network-based federations, as organizations with an identifiable constituency, are in a better position for lobbying and otherwise engaging different stakeholders at multiple levels in negotiations about resource-related policies and activities.
- Networks tend to galvanize around certain “trigger issues,” such as:
 - (a) Group activities -- examples include, study tours, workshops, and trainings
 - (b) The need for better coordination
 - (c) Identification of common constraints
 - (d) The desire to share and learn from other forest users’ experiences
 - (d) The need to exchange material products -- such as seeds or medicinal plants
 - (e) The need for information about resource management policies and legislative rights and responsibilities
 - (f) The need to safe-guard users’ rights and address power imbalances
 - (g) Conflict mediation

In Nepal networking falls into three main categories: strategic planning, issue-based, and federation-building. As mentioned, early user group networks grew out of an increasing curiosity about other forest user groups. The first notable example of this occurred in Dhankuta District in July 1991. Based on the positive outcome of this meeting, and other similar meetings which followed, district-level user-group networking was incorporated into the annual program of District Forest Offices throughout Nepal. However, due to demands for collecting maximum information in minimum time frames, these "network exchanges" metamorphosed into meetings where information was extracted from user groups primarily for DFO's (District Forest Officer) strategic annual planning and budgeting needs.

In contrast, issue-based networking, which occurs through user-to-user exchanges, is mostly informal and concentrates on the sharing of information and material products for mutual benefits. Examples include resin tapping, seed exchange, watershed management, and women's groups. The main actors in these exchanges come from neighboring user groups, or areas where there are other linkages -- such as ties through marriage, well-traveled "nexus" spaces, and at places where people gather -- such as, local markets (HaaD Bazaar). An addition to and expansion upon these networks is FECOFUN, a national federation, which is discussed in detail below.

Federation-Building: FECOFUN

From March 10th to 12th, 1996, the first National General Assembly of FECOFUN was held in Kathmandu. During three intensive days 94 men and 74 women from 38 districts openly discussed and amended the FECOFUN constitution. These representatives also selected a national executive committee, identified operational procedures of the Federation, and planned future activities. The forum (which was based on parliamentary principles of open speech and debate) presented a unique opportunity for forest-users to speak freely, compare experiences, and

offer suggestions for change. While the National Assembly was not the first congregation of rural-based forest users in Nepal, it was the first such event of this scale and magnitude. Some attendees had walked for two or three days and rode in buses for up to 25 hours to attend the meeting.

Based on information or misinformation and personal inclinations, individuals were split along different axes representing various levels of understanding and commitment. Some people remained confused and unclear about the assembly and the federation -- both in terms of purpose and objectives. The idea of a federation for forest-users was too abstract a notion. Underlying their thinking was a more familiar empirical referent. They saw the federation as another project which might deliver goods or services to their district, their village, their user group. Other attendees saw the meeting as a platform for gaining power or prestige, and putting across their own agendas or personal aspirations. Still others had a clearer understanding of the federation not as a project, but more as an entity representing the collective concerns of forest users.

All of these spoken and unspoken visions have emerged in actions and words, at the assembly or in its aftermath, shaping levels of activity or inactivity, and creating different types of opportunities and constraints as the federation has struggled to forge an identity and work with member representatives from west to east -- or, as they say, from Mahakali to Mechhi. While there were significant *in situ* weaknesses at the National Assembly, the meeting nevertheless signified a historic departure in center-periphery representations and representatives. It marked a shift in opportunity-space conceptualizations of who can and should speak for whom.

FECOFUN is the only national federation of community forest users in Nepal. Its office-holders and rank-and-file members are mostly farmers from distant villages. A committed core of Nepalese community forestry professionals belong to an "advisory committee," and many of them have volunteered time and materials; however, unlike most organizations in Nepal, there are no development professionals on staff. The Federation receives funding from its members (membership fees and donations or provision of food and lodging), but the bulk of its monetary support comes from the Ford Foundation and Kathmandu-based international projects.

At present over 1,300 user groups from 42 districts (out of 75) are members of FECOFUN. The Constitution requires a 50 percent representation by women. The steering committee, otherwise known as the secretariat, is in charge of program activities. There are 27 members in the national executive committee, which controls the steering committee -- 14 male and 13 female representatives (with the exception of the Karnali Zone, one each from the 14 political zones of Nepal).

FECOFUN has emanated out of influences from the bottom-up and the top-down. Foremost in this is a history of issue-based and regional networking activities which brought together forest users and individuals in the Ministry of Forestry and Soil Conservation, Department of Forests, District Forest Offices, bi-lateral community forestry projects, and others working in community forestry nationally and regionally. In addition, the discussions at a series of workshops for forest users (though user representation was limited in terms of total numbers and districts) helped to give shape to the idea of a kind of federal structure for organizing forest users groups.

In the milieu of events, workshops, and exchanges leading up to the formation of the Federation no one event, person, discussion, or donor created FECOFUN. Rather like other discursive framings of federated structures, the idea of the Federation emerged out of a *masala* of interactions which drew upon intensive discussions and experiences by an extended community of people (Ostrom 1987). Certainly, FECOFUN has benefited from the support of

advisers (who helped to set the agenda); however, operationally, it has been the labor invested by members of the organization, mostly on a volunteer or per diem basis, which has built the organization and transformed what started as an abstract “idea” into a viable organization.

Since the General Assembly in March 1996, FECOFUN has established its office in Kathmandu, and begun activities for strengthening district branches and expanding the total number of user group members. Some highlights include:

- Assuming ownership of "*Sammudaik Ban*", a weekly radio program on Radio Nepal.
- Publication of a quarterly Federation Newsletter.
- Publication of materials about FECOFUN, community forestry, and forest policy.
- Coordinating a regional women's network on natural resources management, *Himawanti*, which brings together women from India, Nepal, and Pakistan.
- Conducting district-wide general assemblies.

To date Federation activities have fallen into four main categories: conflict mediation, advocacy, awareness raising, and training. Examples of the Federation’s role in advocating for forest user rights and mediating conflicts include:

- Mediating conflicts between and within user groups.
- Mediating conflicts between forest users and the Forest Department.
- Opposing a FINNIDA backed plan to hand-over 32,430 hectares of primarily sal (*Shorea robusta*) forest in Bara District, to a Finnish multinational forestry company, Enso, in conjunction with three Nepalese companies.
- Lobbying Ministers of Parliament (MPs) and submitting a petition to the Prime Minister opposing proposed revisions to the 1993 Forest Act.

It has been suggested that the Federation is “politicized,” with members favoring a particular political party. This claim, however, does not accurately reflect the compositional reality of Federation members throughout Nepal. Party affiliation is heterogeneous -- split between the main political parties in Nepal. Many people ask, “who are these people?” Most of the people involved are respected members of communities and local leaders, with some sort of record of what is referred to as “social work”. They are also predominantly local elites. However, it is important to emphasize that a rural-based local-elite is very different from an elite living and working in Kathmandu. They are not wealthy people. They have modest homes, and modest amounts of *khet* (irrigated) and *bArI* (rain-fed) lands. The fanciest piece of equipment they would own is a radio.

When asked about the Federation most forest users respond positively. They think it is necessary. However, the details of “why” are less readily explained with information about the mandate, organizational profile, and activities remaining sketchy. This is, however, slowly changing. Within the executive and steering committee as well as rank-and-file members, there is an increasing depth of understanding about the role of FECOFUN. Furthermore, there is a growing sense of ownership and interest in making the organization more self-sufficient. Members insist on full transparency in accounting for expenditures and funding received. The Federation’s budget and allocations are now being made public through the quarterly Newsletter that is distributed to all user-group members and meeting minutes which are sent to zonal representatives. Member user groups are also beginning to demand the services promised for

their membership fees. Requests from district branches and member user groups include: leadership training; technical forest-management training; awareness-raising about community forestry policy; information-sharing activities; income-generation programs; conflict mediation; and, networking workshops.

Coming of Age?: Conclusions

In the title of this paper a reference is made to “Community Forestry Coming of Age.” This maturation is interpreted in several ways. It refers to a maturity in understanding by agents of the government and donors about what is working (or not) in community forestry policy and praxis, and an evolution in the thinking which respects forest users as semi-autonomous forest managers with codified rights and responsibilities. It also reflects what forest user groups are beginning to attain through collective action. More specifically, what their organizing and other engagements mean in terms of creating a space for expressing, demanding, and protecting their resource management rights.

As mentioned, state-sponsored community forestry in Nepal started off as a top-down donor-driven policy. It was the outcome of a negotiated endeavor between the center (agents of the government and donors) and periphery (local peoples forest product needs) concerns. The mandate for action emerged out of discussions which remained mostly within the confines of capital cities (between governments, donors, and development practitioners). Negotiations about the purpose and form of this mandate were based on prerogatives set by donors in response to claims about the causes and consequences of deforestation. While this succeeded in justifying a large influx of “environment aid,” the self-articulated positions of forest users were conspicuous by their absence. More recently, however, forest users are beginning to organize themselves in order to bypass external or government intermediaries and better represent their interests in the new Nepalese political milieu.

The Master Plan for the Forestry Sector (1990), in part, created a more secure opportunity-space for users to organize themselves. It identified forest user groups as “autonomous, self-governing institutions with rights to perpetual succession.” The Forest Act of 1993 and Regulations of 1995, then reinforced the outlines of the Master Plan plus confirmed forest user group rights to acquire, transfer and sell forest products. This policy and the resulting legislation grew out of experiences of failure and examples of successful pilot-projects. Reconstituted community forestry is now better suited to local conditions and institutions; it is now being “owned” by forest users who see it as favoring user group interests in protecting, utilizing, and managing their community forests. This process of ownership is strengthened by the dissemination of information and a growing perception of “common cause” enabled through networking and federation-building.

As the number of user groups expanded, and information was needed about changes in policies influencing management objectives, forest users (and others) recognized a need to form broader-based institutions. When forest users got together to discuss their respective situations, they realized that they shared many similar problems. They also discovered, from writing joint-requests for assistance to the Forest Department or other support-providers, that officials were more inclined to respond to and actively seek to rectify collectively-identified and articulated concerns. As networks became more formalized, they proved more effective at engaging in negotiations about resource-related policies and activities at multiple levels. This has begun to open-up new dialectical spaces for articulating concerns and organizing collectively.

Networking is more than a collaboration of individuals or institutions brought together to exchange thoughts or voice complaints; networks represent “communities of ideas” where people interact on the basis of both common and conflicting interests (Engel 1993). Though interactions in Nepal differ depending on contingent factors and individual reasons for affiliation, in the same way that most residents of Nepal perceive themselves as “Nepali” -- whether Tamang or Tharu, whether living in the Mountains or the Terai -- so, too, community forestry users are beginning to identify with other community forestry users. This perception of an increasing commonality of interests is gained through personal relations and group interactions, and a growing sense of shared purpose. Though differences between individuals remain great, the Federation is beginning to act as a catalyst for bringing people together. Forest users in many parts of Nepal are starting to deliberately act on a basis of “common cause”.

From the research conducted it is apparent that collective action by forest users in Nepal are effecting changes leading to:

- increased accountability and transparency
- better formation and post-formation support
- more widespread dissemination of information
- broader-based participation, planning and decision-making
- more extensive sharing of ideas and productive material
- the development of local mechanisms for conflict mediation and resolution

However, there are also potential problems or pitfalls. Questions remain about “who benefits, who loses” and what is the most effective way to negotiate differences. Federations and associated networks can be change-producing or change-protecting institutions (Esman 1991). They can reinforce as well as challenge existing inequalities in power relations. Village-based elites may simply gain further-footholds of influence through their more-ready access to meetings or other interactions, and their propensity to retain positions on committees or within other influential groups. Politicization and factional infighting can also occur in federations. Furthermore, centralizing forces in developing countries frequently pull the locus of control and activity toward capital-cities (Esman 1991). In this way, federation-building could inadvertently detract from decentralization -- by appropriating power and shifting decision-making to the center.

The boundaries of federation and networking activities are still emerging, with potential advantages as well as disadvantages (Campbell 1996). In Nepal forest users are using networks to disseminate information and share productive material. FECOFUN is actively resisting situations that might lead to politicization. Discussions about politics are not allowed in Federation meetings. Member-representatives clearly recognize that community forests simply cannot be split along political party lines. The Federation is also helping to integrate marginalized groups, with confidence-building measures and efforts to increase awareness. An example of this is the role that women are playing in the Federation. Since FECOFUN requires 50 percent representation by women members, more women are being brought into forest user networks.

Since March of 1996 the Federation has come a long way towards building capacity at the center and (to a lesser extent) in its grassroots base. It was a steep learning curve. No steering committee member had had any previous experience with running a national organization. Slowly, however, members are building confidence and learning the skills

required for managing the organization and communicating between themselves as well as with Ministers of Parliament, Forest Department staff, donors and other *ThuLo maanche* (important people).

Arnold (1998) remarks that while most attention to local-collective management of resources has focused on micro factors influencing functioning at the local level, effective local control also requires a more macro willingness of a government to legitimize and empower local institutions and help them enforce their rights. He argues (ibid.: 17) that, "...the success of local solutions is ultimately governed by broader political and institutional factors that determine whether or not common property is a viable option." The resource management options open to individual user groups may have inherent limitations resulting from changing political agendas. But relying on governments (or its agents) to willingly relinquish power or otherwise devolve management and use rights in the short and long-run can be tenuous indeed, especially in places where the resource manager-users are a historically marginalized group and the value of the resource grows over-time (as in the case of forests), making that resource more and more attractive to a government and outsider interests.

As indicated in the paper, FECOFUN has emerged out of the "idea" that forest users from all parts of the country should be linked in order to better represent their interests at the national level. Rooted in a history of networking, it was established to expand and strengthen the role of actual forest-users in policy-making and resource-related activities. In essence, however, it is based on an unspoken but underlying fear that the Nepalese government might change its mind about community forestry -- or in some way undermine the autonomy or benefits legislated to forest user groups. Different factors have influenced the forest policy directions taken by the Nepalese government. At this point most of these policies are supported or, at least, tolerated by the Forest Department's public face -- but not by all of its agents. FECOFUN is addressing discrepancies between policy and action; it is starting to act as a countervailing force in situations where forest-user rights are not properly understood or represented.

Uphoff (1998) emphasizes the need for connecting micro and macro processes, and incorporating multiple perspectives and capabilities. He suggests that there should be linkages between groups at the same level (horizontal), between groups of different levels (vertical), and based on broad coalitions of actors that represent different sectors and levels (ibid:27). FECOFUN, as the first national federation of forest user groups, is in a unique position to represent forest-user interests and encourage multi-layered communication, linking groups horizontally and vertically. Although still at a nascent stage of organizational development, the Federation is shaping a new dialectical space within civil society -- an interface where forestry-related conflicts and questions of property rights or control over resources and their management, can be more effectively debated and negotiated. While these engagements may not warrant the term "movement," they nevertheless represent a challenge to the status quo. They reflect some of the different or "new" ways in which forest-user concerns are beginning to be more effectively expressed.

Bibliography

- Arnold, J. E. Michael (1998). "Devolution of Control of Common Pool Resources to Local Communities: Experiences in Forestry." Discussion Draft. Paper prepared for the UNU/WIDER Project on "Land Reform Revisited: Access to Land, Rural Poverty, and Public Action," 26-28 April 1998, Santiago, Chile.
- Bajracharya, D. (1983). "Deforestation in the Food/Fuel Context: Historical and Political Perspectives from Nepal." *Mountain Research and Development*, 3(3):227-240.
- Brown, T. Louise (1996). *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*. London: Routledge.
- Campbell, Jeffrey Y. (1996). "Emerging Federations in JFM and Community Forestry in India and Nepal: A Briefing Note." Mimeo. Ford Foundation: New Delhi.
- Campbell, J. G., R. J. Shrestha, and F. Euphrat (1987). "Socio-Economic Factors in Traditional Forest Use and Management: Preliminary Results from a Study of Community Forestry Management in Nepal," *Banko Janakari* 1(4): 45-54.
- Caplan, L. (1970). *Land and Social Change in East Nepal: A Study in Hindu-Tribal Relations*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Carter, E. J. (1992). "Tree Cultivation on Private Land in Nepal's Middle Hills: An Investigation into Local Knowledge and Local Needs." O.F.I. Occasional Papers. Oxford: Oxford Forestry Institute.
- Chhetri, Ram B., and Tulsi R. Pandey (1992). "User Group Forestry in the Far-Western Region of Nepal: Case Studies from Baitadi and Achham." Kathmandu: ICIMOD.
- Eckholm, E. (1975). "The Other Energy Crisis: Firewood." Washington, D.C.: World Watch Institute.
- Engel, Paul G. H. (1993). "Daring to Share: Networking among Non-governmental Organizations." In *Linking with Farmers: Networking for Low-External-Input and Sustainable Agriculture*, Alders, Carine, Bertus Haverkort, and Laurens van Veldhuizen, eds. Intermediate Technology Publications: ILEIA.
- English, Richard (1985). "Himalayan State Formation and the Impact of British Rule in the Nineteenth Century." *Mountain Research and Development* 5(1):61-78.
- Esman, Milton J. (1991). *Management Dimensions of Development: Perspectives and Strategies*. Kumarian Press: West Hartford, CT.

- FAO (1995). "Understanding Farmers' Communication Networks: An Experience in the Phillipines." Communication for Development Case-Study. No. 14. Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations: Rome.
- FAO/World Bank (1979). "Cooperative Program on Investment Center." Draft report of the Nepal Community Forestry Development Project Preparatory Mission. Rep. No. 16/79, NEP/2. World Bank: Washington, D.C.
- Fisher, R. J. (1989). "Indigenous Systems of Common Property Forest Management in Nepal." Working Paper No. 18. Honolulu, Hawaii: Environment and Policy Institute.
- Gilmour, D. A. (1990). "Resource Availability and Indigenous Forest Management Systems in Nepal." *Society and Natural Resources* 3:145-158.
- Gilmour, D. A. and R. J. Fisher (1991). *Villagers, Forests and Foresters: The Philosophy, Process and Practice of Community Forestry in Nepal*. Kathmandu, Nepal: Sahayogi Press.
- Graner, Elvira (1996). *User Group Forestry -- Poor Policy for Poor People? Nepal's Forest Legislation from a Political Ecology Perspective*. Ph.D. Dissertation: Freiburg University.
- Greenwood, D. J., William Foote Whyte and Ira Harkavy (1993). Participatory Action Research as a Process and a Goal. *Human Relations* 46, 175-192.
- Gronow, C.J.V. (1987). "Becoming Concerned with People Too: the Forest Department Starting Extension Forestry in Dolakha." Kathmandu: Swiss Association for Technical Assistance.
- Gronow, C.J.V. and N.K. Shrestha (1988). "Manual for a Reorientation Workshop on Community Forestry." Kathmandu: Koshi Hills Community Forestry Project.
- Gronow, J. and N.K. Shrestha (1991). "From Mistrust to Participation: the Creation of a Participatory Environment for Community Forestry in Nepal." ODI Social Forestry Network Paper 126. London: ODI.
- Hamilton, Lawrence (1987). "What are the impacts of Himalayan Deforestation on the Ganges-Brahmaputra Lowlands and Delta? Assumptions and Facts." *Mountain Research and Development*, 7(3):256-263.
- His Majesty's Government of Nepal (1982). *Nepal's National Forestry Plan 1976 (2033)*. Unofficial translation by Nepal Australia Forestry Project, Kathmandu.
- _____. "Master Plan for the Forestry Sector Nepal: Revised Draft." Kathmandu: Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation.

_____ (1993). Forest Act 2049 (1993). Kathmandu.

_____ (1995). Forest Regulations 2051 (1995), Kathmandu.

Hobley, Mary (1990). "Social Reality, Social Forestry: The Case of Two Nepalese Panchayats." Ph.D. Dissertation. Canberra: Australian National University.

Ives, Jack (1987). "The Theory of Himalayan Environmental Degradation: Its Validity and Application Challenged by Recent Research." *Mountain Research and Development*, 7(3):256-263.

Ives, Jack (1991). "Floods in Bangladesh: Who is to Blame?" *New Scientist* 13 April:30-33.

Ives, J. D. and B. Messerli (1989). *The Himalayan Dilemma -- Reconciling Development and Conservation*. London and New York: The United Nations University and Routledge.

Joshi, Amrit L. (1989). "Common Property, the Forest Resource and Government Administration: Implications for Nepal." M.Sc. Thesis. Canberra: Australian National University.

Karan, Pradyumna P. and Hiroshi Ishii (1996). *Nepal: A Himalayan Kingdom in Transition*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press.

Lundberg, Paul (1997). "UNDP's Support to Democratic Decentralization in Nepal." Islamabad: UNDP Regional Governance Facility.

Mahat, T. B. S., D. M. Griffin and K. R. Shepherd (1986). "Human Impact on Some Forests of the Middle Hills of Nepal: (1) Forestry in the Context of the Traditional Resources of the State." *Mountain Research and Development*, 6(3):223-232.

McKean, M. A. and E. Ostrom (1995). "Common Property Regimes in the Forest: Just a Relic from the Past?" *Unasylva* 46(180):3-15.

Messerschmidt, D. A. (1986). "People and Resources in Nepal: Customary Resource Management Systems of the Upper Kali Gandaki," in *Common Property Resource Management*. Washington, D. C.: National Academy Press.

Metz, John J. (1991). "A Reassessment of the Causes and Severity of Nepal's Environmental Crisis." *World Development*, 19(7):805-820.

Ostrom, V. (1987). *The Political Theory of a Compound Republic: Designing the American Experiment*. Second Edition. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Peluso, Nancy Lee (1992). *Rich Forests, Poor People: Resource Control and Resistance in Java*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Poffenberger, Mark (1976). *Patterns of Interactions: Demography, Ecology, and Society in the Nepal Himalayas*. Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Michigan.
- Ramirez, Ricardo (1997). "Understanding Farmers' Communication Networks: Combining PRA with Agricultural Knowledge Systems Analysis." International Conference on Creativity and Innovation at the Grassroots. Indian Institute of Management: Ahmedabad, India.
- Regmi, M. C. (1971). *A Study of Nepali Economic History, 1768-1846*. Delhi: Manjushri.
- Regmi, M. C. (1978). *Thatched Huts and Stucco Palaces: Peasants and Landlords in 19th Century Nepal*. New Delhi: Vikas.
- Regmi, M. C. (1988). *An Economic History of Nepal: 1846-1901*. Varanasi: Nath.
- Shrestha, B. P. and S. C. Jain (1977). *Regional Development in Nepal*. New Delhi: Development.
- Shrestha, Nanda R. (1990). *Landlessness and Migration in Nepal*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- UNDP (1998). "Nepal Human Development Report 1998." Mimeo. Kathmandu: Nepal Southern Asia Centre.
- Uphoff, Norman (1998). "Community-Based Natural Resource Management: Connecting the Micro and Macro Processes, and People with Their Environments." Paper prepared for Plenary Presentation at the "International Workshop on Community-Based Natural Resource Management," Washington, D.C., May 10-14, 1998.
- Whyte, William Foote, Davydd J. Greenwood, and Peter Lazes (1991). "Participatory Action Research: Through Practice to Science in Social Research." In William Foote Whyte, ed., *Participatory Action Research*, Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- World Bank (August 1978). "Nepal Forestry Sector Review." Washington, D.C.: World Bank.