

CHITWAN HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT - IV

(Extension of wildlife corridor by enhancing the capacity of local people towards conservation)

Project # 00-182-006

ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted to

SAVE THE TIGER FUND
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
USA

Submitted by

King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation
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ACRONYMS

APA	Appreciative Planning and Action
CFUG	Community Forest User's Groups
CHRP	Chitwan Habitat Restoration Project
GEMN	Green Energy Mission/Nepal
GIS	Geographic Information System
GIIS	Global Initiatives of International Secretariat
KMTNC	King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation
NCRTC	Nepal Conservation Research and Training Centre
RCNP	Royal Chitwan National Park
STF	Save the Tiger Fund
VDC	Village Development Committee
WG	Women's Groups

Executive Summary

Realizing the need to enhance community forestry program within the buffer zone of Royal Chitwan National Park (RCNP) to protect and restore habitat of endangered species like tigers, the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) / Nepal Conservation and Research Training Center (NCRTC) is conducting habitat restoration projects in and around RCNP buffer zone. This project was implemented by the continuous funds available from Save the Tiger Fund, USA and is running in its fifth year. Since, the inception of this project over 2,500 ha of degraded forest land have revived into green corridor, reinstating frequent visits and resettlement of the endangered species like tigers, rhinoceros and other wildlife/bird species within the rehabilitated area. It has also provided ample resources for the local community living within the buffer zone.

In this program conservation activities are commissioned mainly in two Village Development Committees (VDC) - Bachhauli and Piple. To restore and strengthen the forest areas encircling the park; promoting guardianship to reduce existing pressure on the park resources by providing alternative resources, opportunities on ecotourism by warranting micro enterprises among locals; and extending and enhancing the conservation programs are the key objectives of the project.

Several activities during 2000/01 period were accomplished in the park buffer area and its vicinity. Following activities were undertaken:

1. Habitat Restoration
 - Restoration of community forests in Piple and Bachhauli VDCs.
 - Wildlife monitoring
 - GIS Analysis
 - Ecotourism micro-enterprises
2. Awareness Generation
 - Leadership training program
 - Training on identification, utilization and management of medicinal plants
 - Conservation education training workshop
 - Training workshop on importance of plants
 - Interaction meeting for operational plan preparation
3. Women Empowerment Program
 - Saving-credit program
 - Women literacy program

The conclusion part of the report stresses on the success story and lessons learned of these activities in the assigned areas.

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1 BACKGROUND

The King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC)/Nepal Conservation Research and Training Centre (NCRTC) is supporting community forestry programs in the buffer zone of Royal Chitwan National Park (herein RCNP), since 1989. Over 4,000 ha of highly degraded forest land have developed into viable community forest areas and into a potential habitat for the endangered species like tigers and rhinoceros. These community forests create a continuous green belt within the northeastern buffer zone sector of RCNP. Thus, 14 users' group committees thereby, are responsible in managing these forest areas. Till date, they are supplying firewood, thatch grasses to the users' also generating revenues from ecotourism. Wildlife population has significantly augmented since restoration of these areas into green forest. Frequent visits and resettlement of flagship species like rhinos and tigers illustrates the success of forest rehabilitation. In addition a recent biological survey showed more than 162 species of birds, 4 species of deer, wild boar, and leopard resident in this area.

2 OBJECTIVES

The key objective of this project is to reinstate deteriorating wildlife habitat at buffer zone of RCNP. Detailed objectives of the project are to:

1. Restore approximately 200 ha of fragmented and degraded forest over a period of one year by creating a continuous belt of community forests along northeastern buffer zone of RCNP.
2. Create opportunities for ecotourism and micro-enterprises. Promote guardianship to reduce existing pressure on the park resources.
3. Train a core group of local naturalists to obtain direct benefits from tourism and navigating indirect benefits in bio-diversity conservation.
4. Provide effective management and monitoring training to the user groups and stakeholders.
5. Enhance and extend conservation education and awareness program.

3 PROGRESS ON PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 HABITAT RESTORATION

3.1.1 Parewaswari Community Forest (200 ha in Piple VDC)

About 200 ha degraded forest area of Parewaswori Community forest in Piple Village Development Committee (VDC) have selected for management. Approximately 170 ha forest is conserved for natural regeneration and remaining 30 ha area is utilized for the plantation (annex-1 for the map). At Piple VDC, total 42,591 seedlings of different native plant species was planted and distributed (annex - 2 for detail). Among them 58.6 % seedlings were planted in Parewaswari Community Forest, 36 % were distributed to other community for plantation and remaining 6.4 % were distributed to local schools and temples/shrines to maintain green surroundings. The entire 200 ha area of Parewaswari Community forest is barbed wire fenced from livestock grazing.

3.1.2 Jankauli Community Forest (22 ha in Bachhauli VDC)

In Jankauli, 22 ha of community forest area have been re-planted and well fenced. First phase of seedlings planting in 22 ha completed in 1991 and second phase of planting in 20 ha completed in 1992. In 1993, however, total 42 ha of Jankauli plantation inundated by monsoon rain, later restored in 1996. The area is currently well protected by barbed wire fence. More than 24,698 seedlings of various native species of trees were planted, emphasizing on their economic and medicinal value, like bamboo, goose berries, harro, barro, neem etc (annex - 1, map for location of this community forest).

3.2 WILDLIFE MONITORING

In the activity site, direct and indirect methods are used in monitoring tiger population, and the population of its prey. Other wild animals like those that rhinoceros and deer are monitored through direct method. Priliminary report shows that there are 32 species of birds and nine species of wildlife (Sambhar, Barking Deer, Leopard, Porcupine, Sloth Bear, Langur, Rhesus

Monkey, and Scaly Anteater) were found in the monitoring areas of Piple VDC. Tiger is the frequent visitor in the area. The final monitoring data will be illustrated in GIS map after completion of monitoring project.

3.3 GIS ANALYSIS

A Hewlett Packard designed zet 800 plotter purchased from the USA with adequate accessories, helped in elevating the existing GIS data into Arc View 3.1, Arc Info and Auto Cad software, of NCRTC. To gain familiarity on usage of GIS method, one-week training conducted to NCRTC Rangers, Wildlife Technicians, and Women Development Assistants, in the first week of July 2001.

Procurement of the digital map of Chitwan District is in process from the Topographical Survey Department. A GIS map of current project and activity site is in the offing.

3.4 ECO-TOURISM MICROENTERPRISES

Upon request to KMTNC for technical support for eco-tourism development in Devasthan Community Forest, Bhandara, preparation of a modus operandi of cumulative 14-community forest areas along the north of Rapti river bank and east-west highway is in progress. These 14 forest areas adjoin encircling the main settlement of east Chitwan by connecting Baghmara, Kumrose, Bhandara, Kathar, Piple, Kankali, Ajigangara and Barandabhar forest corridor (map for location).

Chitwan has high potential for ecotourism development with wide spectrum of nature based recreational prospects. Therefore, NCRTC is liaisoning with Nepal Tourism Board, Chitwan branch-office, in developing community forest areas as recourse destination in Sauraha, also, to alleviate existing pressure at RCNP and boosting the length of stay of tourists in Chitwan.

4 AWARENESS GENERATION

4.1 LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

One week Global Leadership Program (patented REBiRTH™) was held in collaboration with Global Initiatives of International Secretariat (GIIS), and was followed by a three weeks follow-up program. This program in particular was catered to the Chairpersons of the Community Forest User's Groups (CFUGs), the Women's Groups (WGs) and NCRTC staff. Primarily the program focused on method of addressing imminent management issues.

4.2 TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION, UTILIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF MEDICINAL PLANTS

A two weeks long training on medicinal plants was hosted, in coordination with Green Energy Mission/Nepal (GEMN), to local communities. Seven women participated in total of 25 participants.

The key objectives of this training are; (i) to train local community in identifying herbal medicinal plants, (ii) production of simple herbal medicines, and (iii) application of herbal medicines on simple ailments. In addition, the training addressed the local community in understanding the symbiotic relationship between human and nature.

“.....when I heard about the medicinal plant species around our households and learn the importance in remedying some of our most common diseases, I was eager to learn the value of plants in our surroundings. The most common disease in our village is asthma. The training taught me to prepare herbal medicine by using medicinal plants collected near by my house and I distributed these medicines to the asthma patients. It showed positive result, therefore, people have requested for this medicine. I am happy to know medicinal values of plants, for that reason, we must save plant species within our community ... who knows they may acquire medicinal values in future”..... (Mr. Kala Mohan Rijal, participant from Buffer Zone VDC Bachhauli).

Topics discussed during the training period:

- Preliminary information on human health and ecosystem; Ayurveda science and its branches; functions and nutritional factors of food; method on prognosis of most prevailing diseases; availability of herbal medicinal plants in around Chitwan and within Nepal.
- Method of identification of pharmaceutical properties of medicinal plants; application in remedying certain ailments; manufacture of simple medicines from varieties of medicinal plants.
- Field visits to Baghmara and Kumrose Community Forests for preliminary survey, collection, and drying of medicinal plants.
- Evaluation of trainees, discussion and closing ceremony of the training.

“.....during the Identification and Utilization of Medicinal Herbs training I was elated to know medicinal values of plants. I have never realized the potentials behind these plants in our forests and never before thought these plants would possess so much medicinal properties. The training made me aware of the value of plants in saving our lives and maintaining our health. In truth, we were loosing our resources before, now the training has made us realize their potential and to protect them from being extinct. Currently we are selling herbs at greater price. We are also managing harvest by sustainable methods.....” (Bed Bdr. Adhikari, Secretary, Kankali Community Forest and Chairman, Herbal Medicine Center, Chitwan).

4.3 CONSERVATION EDUCATION TRAINING WORKSHOP

A one-day workshop on Water and Women Empowerment was organized, to provide relevant information on safe drinking water, its conservation, and impact on human-health, environment, and economy of the local community. Around 75 women and 23 men participated in this workshop. Most of the women participants commended on the success of the training program. Also, they expressed concern on vulnerability prospect while fetching water in the rural areas of Nepal.

Accordingly, the cooperation from male participants in fetching water was strongly articulated, consequently, making male participants acknowledging

the responsibility for their household advantages.

4.4 TRAINING WORKSHOP ON IMPORTANCE OF PLANTS

To generate awareness on the importance of plants in human lives, a one-day workshop was organized. Around 50 male and female participants attended the training course. In the training around 100 plant species of various functions; social, economical, religious were discussed as well as surveyed. Of that 60 % of plants possessed medicinal values. Earlier the participants were ignorant on various utilities of plants, however, the training helped in understanding stewardship in nurturing and recognizing the intrinsic values of plant and nature.

4.5 INTERACTION MEETING FOR OPERATIONAL PLAN PREPARATION

The Kumrose, Jankauli and Baghmara Community Forest areas will be integrated in the buffer zone community forest. The modus operandi of these forests needs to be reviewed incorporating new guidelines to manage the forest competently.

KMTNC/NCRTC organized a one-day workshop for the users of Kumrose Community Forest. Pertinent problems with regard to efficient management and distribution of resources from the community forest were discussed. Following are the problems, solutions and recommendations made during the workshop:

Table 1 - Problems, solutions and recommendations suggested by the members of the user's group:

SN	Problems	Solutions	Recommended Action
1.	Crop depredation: This is mainly due to the rhino traveling along the river goes in the agricultural field.	Relief assistance to the farmers suffering mostly from pillage. Effective fencing mechanism to be introduced to prevent rhino encroachment.	Appropriate definition on distribution patterns for severely affected farmers.

2.	Equitable Distribution: The resources are not distributed equally on the basis of economic status. The poor and the rich households are receiving equal amount, creating disparity among the users.	The users to be categorized in compliance to the size of the land holdings. The resources to be distributed according forest dependence.	Proper definition of users to be defined in modus operandi. Forest dependents shall be given first priority when distributing the benefits of plantation.
3.	Proper planning: KCF is not transparent to users in making annual plan and distributing the revenues.	All users should participate when finalizing the annual plan and revenue distribution.	The process of annual plan for the new project shall explicitly defined in modus operandi.
4.	Exploration of NTFPs: KCF is not offering any help in exploring the possibilities for the utilization and the management of NTFPs.	NTFPs to be effectively managed in finding markets for the products of users.	Efficient management of NTFPs shall be given top priority in the forthcoming operation plan.

5 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

CHRP-IV project from its initiation has strongly emphasized programs on women empowerment. Therefore, current functional literacy program was moduled, in coordination with CFUGs of Baghmara and Kumrose and the WGs of Bachhauli and Kumrose VDCs. The objective of this program is to increase literacy level, as well understanding the concept of conservation and development.

Several women' groups were formed from Bachhauli and Kumrose VDCs. A one-day sensitization workshop was conducted to the participants detailing on the positive aspect of women literacy program at household and community level. For easy understanding of the program, "Appreciative Planning and Action" (APA) method was used to village women. During the discussion, prerequisite of group formation and the benefits was informed, also the importance of saving and credit program was highlighted.

It was endeavored to include illiterate, social and economic disadvantaged women in a group formation. The program focused primarily on activities

related to women: (a) empowering socially and economically disadvantaged women, and (b) capacity building at decision making level.

5.1 ACTIVITIES

Following activities were conducted by the women' groups for women literacy and saving and credit programs.

5.1.1 Saving and Credit Program

The members of the women groups started depositing money the moment their group was constituted. The groups adopted two types of savings: (a) savings to carry out income generating activities, (b) savings for household purposes in difficult times. This type of saving program, in principal will be effective in allowing women using savings prudently when carrying out economic activities, also, enabling to establish micro-enterprises independently.

5.1.2 Women Literacy Program

The women literacy programs are specifically catered for each women group, in view of promoting, improving women's educational status and encouraging women in initiating small-scale enterprises. In conjunction to the literacy program, conservation awareness program will also run parallel.

Women literacy program is for nine months, and has three components each of three months period. The first component is for simple reading, writing, calculation, and generic information on group formation and savings and credit. The second component focuses on technicalities of micro enterprises and the usage of saving funds for income generating activities. The third component concentrates on the concept of development of village bank and its long-term effects. In nutshell, the program basically is to make women able to read, write, and empower them socially and economically.

The conservation awareness program addresses the holistic approach in safeguarding natural resources and identifying instrumental values of land. It will also address on paramount need of women's participation in managing community forest efficiently and biodiversity conservation.

6 SUCCESS INDICATORS

Within a year of a project implementation, constructive changes are observed. The STF assistance helped to expand wildlife habitats in the Buffer Zone of Royal Chitwan National Park. The project encouraged numerous opportunities for viable economic development through ecotourism.

Following are the success indicators anticipated in reaping long-term benefits to the local community:

6.1 REDUCED DEPENDENCY ON THE EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Local communities constantly asked for financial aid to execute conservation and development activities in the village, prior to the establishment of the project. The leadership training subsequently changed the perception of the locals on dependency and seeks assistance only when resources are minimal.

An explicit example can be illustrated from the user's meeting of Devasthan Buffer Zone Community Forest. In this meeting the community forest user's group requested KMTNC only to provide some cement poles and technical support; although, there were 12 agendas for economic development and biodiversity conservation. In addition, the Chairman explained that voluntary labor force would be harnessed for the development and management of their community forest.

6.2 INCREASED SELF UNDERSTANDINGS

All the participants expressed the importance of teamwork, support to their family members in any activities and understanding each other's problems. The training brought significant changes in particular among male participants who utilized their time productively by helping their partners in household chores like washing the dishes. Majority of the male participants refrained from bad habits of alcohol drinking, smoking, and chewing tobacco and so forth. They realized their responsibilities towards their family and hence, started coming home early.

The female participants started networking on the social issues, offering suggestions in resolving the problems.

6.3 APPRECIATING NATURE

The training program on medicinal herbs taught the participants the importance of plants and its properties; production of simple herbal medicines and its use on prevalent ailment like asthma. The participants understood the importance of medicinal plants and hence championed in conservation and sustainable managing the plants of medicinal properties. In other words, the participants actually recognized the fundamental concept of sustainable conservation of nature for the benefit of mankind.

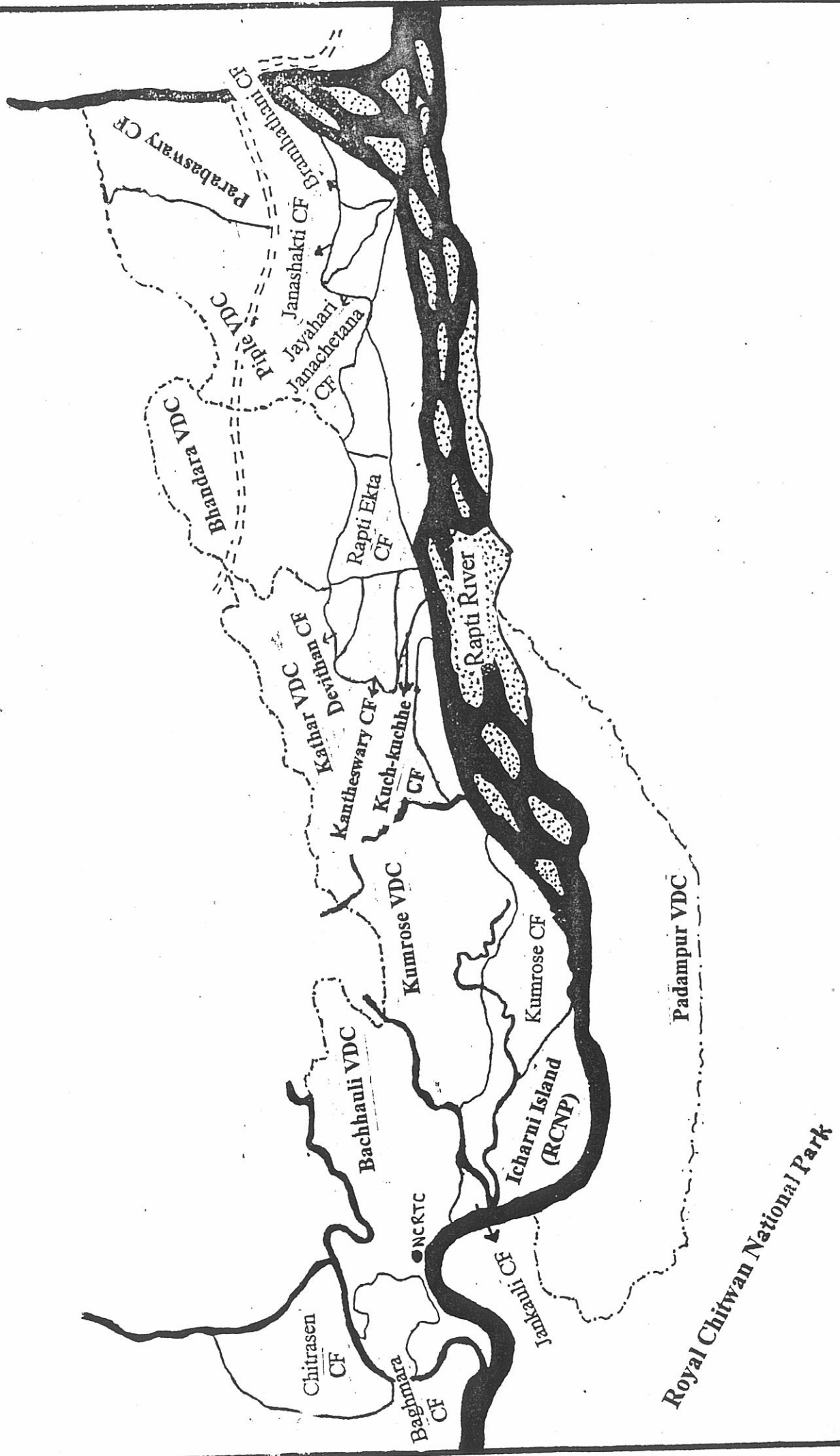
6.4 INCREASED WOMEN PARTICIPATION

The women empowerment program commenced this year is anticipated to bring significant changes on literacy rate among the women participants, particular on economy sector. This program is anticipated to empower women on decision making at higher-level and capacity building for conservation. It is further hoped that more women participation will increase in this program.

Previously males, both at the household and community level, overlooked issues relating to women. But after the sensitization workshop, it helped them to understand the women's problems more clearly.



Community Forest Supported by KMTNC/NCRTC



Annex -2

Number of sapling produced

S.N	Local Names	Scientific Names	Use	No. of saplings produced
1.	Vellor	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	Fodder	290
2.	Nemaro	<i>Ficus roxburghii</i>	Fodder	22
3.	Sisoo	<i>Dalbergia sisoo</i>	Fuel, timber & fodder	20,615
4.	Khair	<i>Acacia catechu</i>	Medicinal	305
5.	Bakaino	<i>Melia azedirachta</i>	Medicinal, fuel	15,803
6.	Harro	<i>Terminilia chebula</i>	Medicinal	116
7.	Barro	<i>Terminilia bellerica</i>	Medicinal	1,526
8.	Bans	<i>Dendrocalmus spp.</i>	Economical	1,666
9.	Kutmiro	<i>Litsea monopetala</i>	Fodder	450
10.	Amala	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	Medicinal	918
11.	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Medicinal	265
12.	Amaro	<i>Spondias cytheria</i>	Fodder	465
13.	Siris	<i>Albizzia spp.</i>	Ornamental	20
14.	Gulmore	<i>Delonix regia</i>	Ornamental	115
15.	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Medicinal, religious	101
16.	Badhar	<i>Artocarpus lakoocha</i>	Fodder	14
Total				42,591

Annex - 3

Medicinal Plants found and in the Parewaswari Community Forest collected and identified by the participants

SN	Local Names	Botanical Names	Parts used	Used for
1	Bhujetro	<i>Beautior minor</i>	Seed	Round worm
2	Kumai, Kakmachhi	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Vegetative part	Jaundice
3	Jalpipali	<i>Lippia nodiflora</i>	Leaf	Skin diseases
4	Bhalayo	<i>Semecarpus anacardium</i>	Seed	Manufacturing energetic medicine
5	Sahadevi	<i>Vernonia sineria</i>	Root	Fever
6	Mithe Neem	<i>Muraia konangai</i>	Leaf	Appetizer
7	Bajradanti Kamini	<i>M. paniculata</i>	Leaf	Wound
8	Lajbanti	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	Root dust	Stop bleeding
9	Banmara, Bhaimara	<i>Eupatorium adenoforum</i>	Leaf	Stop bleeding
10	Mayur Sirawa	<i>Elephantopus skabus</i>	Root	Fever & burning effect of urination
11	Camuna kumbhi	<i>Caria arboria</i>	Bark	Nasal problem
12	Bhalmase phool	<i>Fleminga sp.</i>	Root	Manufacturing energetic medicine
13	Main Kandher	<i>Randior Dumetorium</i>	Fruit	Vomiting
14	Aankh	<i>Calotropis proceror</i>	Milky juice	Curing old wound
15	Jamun	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	Seed	Diabetes
16	Sindhure	<i>Malotus philippinensis</i>	Red powder of leaf	Curing thread & tape worm
17	Sudarsan	<i>Crinum defictum</i>	Leaf juice	Curing earache
18	Kancho simrik	<i>Bixa orelana</i>	Leaf juice	Plastering broken bone
19	Khhiro/ Indrajau	<i>Holarrheana antidysentrica</i>	Seed	Curing dysentery
20	Rajbrichhya	<i>Casia fistulata</i>	Seed	Constipation & Jaundice
21	Ranisinka, Hansapani	<i>Adiantum patalis-veneris</i>	Whole plant	Fever
22	Rasana	<i>Vandara roxburghii</i>	Whole plant	Joint pain & Rheumatism
23	Banadua	<i>Zingiber chasomber</i>	Rhizome	Joint pain & Rheumatism
24	Bankurilo	<i>Asparagus racemocus</i>	Root	Better breast feeding, Energetic
25	Banaanp	<i>Magnifera sylastrica</i>	Fruit	Gastric, Appetizer, Stomach pain
26	Bankapas	<i>Hibiscus arboreum</i>	Root juice	Proper & timely menstruation
27	Bantori	<i>Abeimosas morchatus</i>	Seed	Energetic
28	Ban kakro	<i>Solena heterophylla</i>	Fruit	
29	Sal	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	Resin	Diarrhea, Joint pain

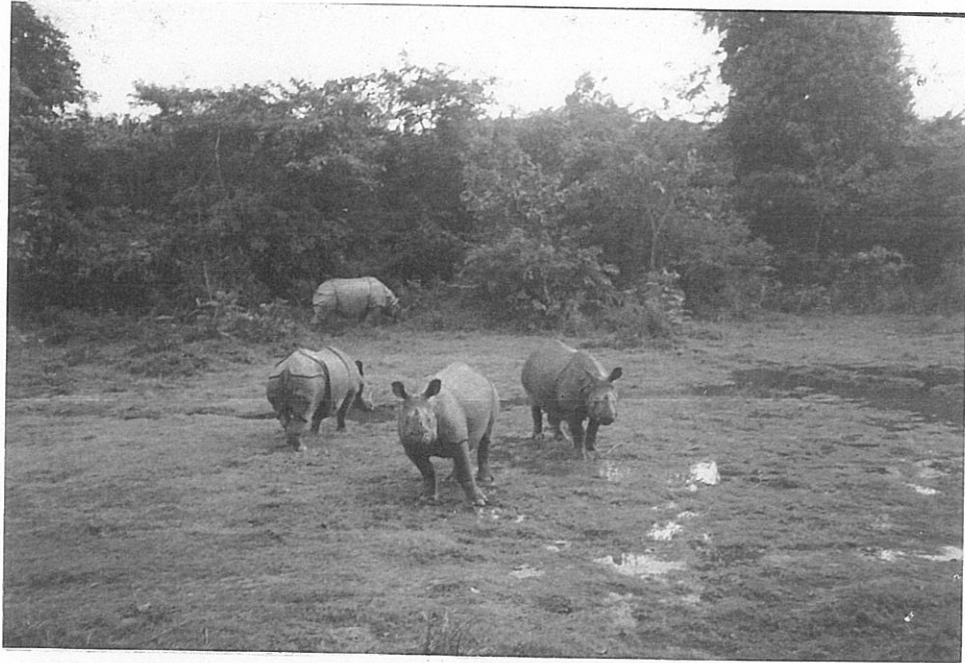
30	Salpani	<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	Bark	For chyvanprash manufacture, energetic
31	Lata palaas, Madan lahara	<i>Spatholobus parviflorus</i>	Stem juice	Worm
32	Kukur diano, Chopchini	<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Root	Vernal diseases
33	Gajapurni, Punarnawa	<i>Boorhavia diffusa</i>	Whole plant	
34	Ban jai	<i>Jasminum sambac</i>	Leaf	Antiseptic & Wound
35	Nundhiki	<i>Portulaca oleracia</i>	Vegetative part	Energetic
36	Datiwan, Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Leaf, Seed, Root	Energetic, Blood purification
37	Amba, Guava	<i>Psidium guajava</i>	Young leaf	Toothache
38	Jyotismati, Maal kangunii	<i>Celetris paniculata</i>	Seed	Brain tonic
39	Chabo	<i>Piper chava</i>	Stem	Abdominal pain, Indigestion
40	Dudhe laharo, krishna sariwa	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	Milky juice	Blood purification, Skin diseases
41	Kalomusali	<i>Curculigo orchoides</i>	Root	Energetic
42	Dhanyaro, Flame of the forest	<i>Woodjoidia fruticosa</i>	Flower	Diarrhea
43	Saariwa anantamool	<i>Hemedicus indicus</i>	Leaf	Blood purification, Skin diseases
44	Balyhar, Bhumibalaa	<i>Cida himilas</i>	Stem, Root, Leaf	Energetic
45	Jhinti	<i>Burteria cristata</i>	Whole plant	Urination
46	Saandan, sendan	<i>Ujenia ujininsis</i>	Resin	Diarrhea
47	Bhuiamala	<i>Phylanthus americus</i>	Whole plant	Jaundice
48	Dudheshar	<i>Euphorbia hista</i>	Whole plant	Asthma
49	Bhringraj, Keshraj	<i>Castus speciosus</i>	Whole plant	Eye power, Jaundice
50	Bet lauri, Kebuk	<i>Castus speciosus</i>	Root	Family planning
51	Shivalingi	<i>Bryonia sp.</i>	Seed	Childless problem
52	Tribrita, Nisoth	<i>Operculina turpethum</i>	Root skin	Gastric
53	Gurju, Guduchi		Stem	Sugar diabetes, Fever
54	Artibalaa	<i>Abutilon indicum</i>	Whole plant	Energetic
55	Bakaina, Mahanimba	<i>Melia azadirachta</i>	Stem bark, Leaf	Worm
56	Ander	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Seed oil	Constipation, Joint pain
57	Ghanti phool	<i>Hibiscus rosasinensis</i>	Flower	Stop much bleeding during menstruation
58	Bohari	<i>Cordia dichotoma</i>	Stem bark, Fruit	Cough
59	Taatari	<i>Dilenia pentagyna</i>	Fruit	Better digestion
60	Khaksi	<i>Sterbulus asper</i>	Stem bark	Cholera



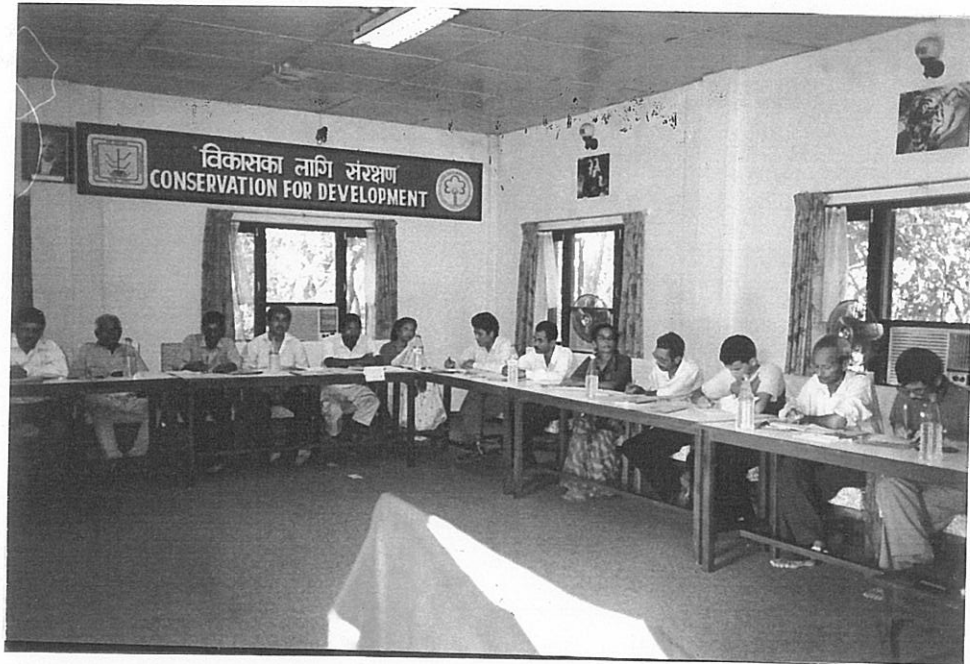
Users' group's contribution for the plantation in their community forest. They are mainly contributing for digging pit holes and planting sapling.



Participants of one day training/workshop program about "Water and women empowerment".



Rhinos (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) colonize in Community Forest area.



Participants taking training on leadership provided by KMTNC/NCRTC.