

Social Impact Assessment

On

proposed project

Sustainable Land Management in the Churia Range, Nepal.

1. Introduction

1.1. The proposed project “Sustainable Land Management in the Churia Range, Nepal” is 3 year pilot initiative funded by GEF in 4 districts (Rautahat, Bara, Parsa and Makwanpur) that is located in southeaster range of the Churia range. The districts are identified through high climate change vulnerability index and high flood vulnerability index as per NAPA 2010 ranking. The project will be executed in partnership with 3 Ministries – Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Forest and Ministry of Land Reform with technical assistance from WWF-Nepal.

1.2. Project aim

The proposed project aims to arrest land degradation from human activities in the Churia Range and to reduce vulnerability to climate change through improved land and forest management and sustainable practices. It has proposed 3 main components to stop land degradation in the Churia region – (i) promoting sustainable agricultural and livestock management practices; (ii) engaging local communities in forest conservation; and (iii) creating the enabling conditions for inter-sectoral collaboration for sustainable land use and management.

1.3. Methodology

Two prone methodologies were used for the social impact assessment (SIA):

- Review of relevant document
- Consultation with WWF staffs related with the project

1.4 Rationale of the social impact assessment (SIA)

The assessment was undertaken as per the requirement of WWF’s policy to ensure that the proposed project does not have any unintended adverse environmental and social consequences. The SIA was carried out based on the ToR provided. See Annex 1, ToR.

2. Assessment of social impact of the proposed project component by output:

The assessment is carried out in two levels for each components –(i) general observation of the document in identifying the gap in the output level by component-wise; and (ii) the assessment of social impact of the proposed project component by outputs as stated in the project document.

2.1 Gap identification assessment at output level

(i) General observation is that while assessing the proposed project document the outputs stated in the project document are more at the activity level. The log-frame has provided outputs but it has not quantified the outputs. The document and log-frame should be supportive of each other.

2.1.1. Project component 1, Gap Identification

Under outcome 1.1, it has proposed twenty water storage points within 4 districts. It does not mention the capacity of water storage. The document has mentioned that 200 ha will be irrigated. The analysis of number of water storage and its capacity is not clear if it is to irrigate 200 ha. of land.

Under outcome 1.2, it has proposed at the output level (1.2.1) that it will facilitate twelve stakeholder consultations in 4 districts. It has not quantified number of participants in the workshop from gender and social inclusion prospective.

Under 1.2.2, it has failed to identify number of productive cattle breeds, number of households practicing stall-feeding.

Under 1.2.4, it has proposed twenty community training events. It has not quantified how many events per district and there is no quantified number of participants from gender and social inclusion prospective.

Under 1.2.5, fifteen community grants are proposed in 4 districts and it is not clearly spelled out what the grants consists and who will be eligible for it.

Under 1.2.6, capacity building of local community members and government extension services is proposed but again the quantified data and gender and social inclusion prospective is missing.

2.2 Assessment of social impact of the proposed project component by output as stated in the project document.

2.2.1 Component 1: Sustainable management for improved flows of agro-ecosystem services

The proposed project document states that environmentally damaged agro-pastoral practices on the unstable Churia slopes are causing widespread erosion and land degradation. Extreme poverty compels poor to clear slopes for cultivation that is spreading land degradation. In addition livestock are allowed to graze freely in forest and steep slopes, contributing to removal of ground cover and loosing of soil. Leading towards soil erosion and landslides and intensifying land degradation.

The project proposes to address this component through supporting agro-ecosystem flows by maintaining or improving forested areas and hillside conditions through sustainable agricultural and livestock management practices in project areas.

This component has 2 outcomes.

Outcome 1.1 - Improve agricultural management through innovative pilot practices introduced in field level that reduce erosion and climate vulnerability.

Under this outcome there are 4 proposed outputs related activities. All 4 outputs analyzed from the environmental and social aspects indicate that the outputs are not harmful environmentally and socially. However, one of the outputs dealing with irrigation due to the sensitive nature may lead towards social conflict if it is not handled well. This may hamper in the implementation of the planned activity.

SALT technology: The proposed technology will cover at least 200 ha. of agriculture land in 4 piloted districts to reduce erosion and climate vulnerability on steep slopes.

Positive impact:

- Improve farming system in slope terraced land through soil and manure retention that is washed down side hill in monsoon there by reducing erosion and climate vulnerability ;
- The migrated communities from mid hills to Churia lacks knowledge in slope cultivation their knowledge of farming system in sloped terraced land will be enhanced;
- Reduce shifting agriculture and slash & burn practices retaining forest coverage;
- Increase agriculture production improving their food sufficiency to some extent.

Area for improvement:

- Adoption of new technology by local residents primarily women, dalit, janajatis of Churia hills who are poor, illiterate and living in remote areas, is a big challenge.
- Sustainability of adoption of technology after termination of the project is another issue that needs large quantity of planting materials to establish hedge rows for the SALT.
- The SALT technology has been piloted long before in Nepal but it has not yet reached to farmers' field till now.

Suggestion:

- Enhance poor communities (women, dalit and Janajati) capacity in adopting new technology through their involvement.

Mix cropping pattern: The mixed- cropping technique to be implemented in 200 ha. in the piloted 4 districts to increase soil fertility and reduce climate vulnerability .

Positive impact:

- The mixed cropping practice with legume and non-legume species has no environmental and social risk.

- The practice of mix cropping will increase soil fertility leading toward increase production of crop as cultivation increases by three times a year (depending upon irrigation availability) increasing food sufficiency to some extent.
- This will improve income and health of women, children and other community members.

Area for improvement:

- Lack of irrigation facility;
- Lack of extension services;
- The new technique should be women friendly and easily adoptable.
- Lack of follow -up

Suggestion:

- Involve women, poor, dalit and Janajati in mix cropping pattern who are mainly responsible for agriculture practices due to migrations of male members;
- Enhance their knowledge in seed selection and storage;
- Develop linkages with government extension services or train local resource person (LRP) for extension services giving priority to gender and social inclusion;
- Provide refresher training as one time training is not sufficient.

Water collection and storage for terrace irrigation: Twenty water collection and storage point from uphill source and rainwater for irrigations are proposed.

Positive impact:

- Access to irrigation facility increase in farm production;
- Knowledge and skill enhancement of local communities in water storage and collection;
- Decrease in unsustainable harvesting of NTFP and workload of women;
- Increase participation of women in social and development activities increasing their decision making role.

Area for improvement:

- Water (natural resources) are political issue and captured by local elites;
- Social conflict may arise between the traditional users and local elites;
- Lack of technical knowhow for repairing and maintenance.

Suggestions:

- Ensure agreement between two parties (traditional users and the local elites);
- Formation of inclusive user committee consisting (UC) of women and socially disadvantage group;
- Ensure the UC has well functioning rules and regulation;
- Trained local resource person for maintenance and protection of the source and system;
- Adopt different techniques of water harvesting appropriate in Churia hills. - Individual rain water collection and storing and construction of conservation ponds to capture rainwater and flash floods.

Bio-engineering: The project proposed to undertake bio-engineering in 6 sites of 3 districts to stabilize soils, reduce erosion and restore productivity in heavily degraded areas.

Positive impact:

- Environmentally sound;
- Decreases land degradations and soil erosions.

Area for improvement:

- Affects poor communities living near sites;
- Capacity of local community particularly poor, women, Dalits and Janajati, who are illiterate, is a big issue in adopting bio-engineering practices.

Suggestion:

- Site identification with consultation of the poor, women, dalit and janjati;
- Enhance capacity of poor, women, dalit and Janajati in bio-engineering practices.

Outcome 1.2: Improved land management through enhancing the enabling environment within the agriculture sector. There are 6 main outputs related activities. Analysis of activities indicated that there are 2 outputs level activities from the social aspect are vulnerable that will affect the poor and marginalized community members i.e. identification of pasture land and disaster prone areas.

Identification and designate grazing pastures: It is proposed that a total of twelve stakeholder consultations in 4 districts will be undertaken to identify and designate grazing pastures in areas less prone to erosion.

Positive impact:

- Environmentally and socially sound reduces erosion and free grazing;
- Identification of grazing pasture through consultations;
- Maintain social harmony in the community due to control grazing in paddy field.

Area for improvement:

- Conflicting situation may arise as the local elite may have greater control over the grazing land;
- Consultations only at the institutional levels without community involvement.

Suggestions:

- Consultations and identification of gazing pastures with active participation of community members such as women, poor, dalit and Janajati for their consent and prior approval;
- Formation of pasture committee inclusive of 50% poor, women, dalit and Janajati representatives;
- The rules imposed on the designated grazing pasture should be pro poor for easy accessibility of grazing land to all.

Improve livestock raising: various outputs level activities such as improve cattle breeds, stall feeding and promotion of native fodder and forage in at least 6 sites of 3 districts is proposed.

Positive impact:

- Environmentally and socially sound;
- Stall feeding improves livestock productivity;
- Reduce environmental hazards, soil erosion, landslides affecting forest vegetation;
- Promotion of native fodder and forage grass leading towards self sufficiency of community and maintain forest natural habitation;
- Promotion of improved breed of cattle reduces the number of cattle, fewer burdens in the forest there by improving forest vegetation, better economic return;
- Save time of women in collecting fodder and children in grazing animals;
- Increase participation of women in other activities and children to attend school;
- Create social harmony with less conflict between the communities' decreases grazing in neighbors' paddy and vegetable land.

Area for improvement:

- Increases workload of women due to stall feeding and caring of improved livestock;
- Lack of technical services;
- Lack of animal insurance.

Suggestion:

- Linkages with government extension services;
- Capacitate local resource person through animal veterinary training;
- Ensure the practice of animal insurance.

Area identification susceptible to natural disasters: In the 4 piloted districts vulnerability, risk assessment and hazard mapping will be conducted to identify areas prone to natural disasters.

Positive impact:

- Susceptible areas identified;
- Communities are informed of such areas;
- Human casualty avoided.

Areas for improvement:

- Relocation of households settled by the poorest;
- Displacement of the poorest households;
- Lack of consultation with community members.

Suggestions:

- Severity of the problems its impact and consequences disseminate to the community living in such areas;
- Provide options through information sharing on deciding to stay or move away from disaster prone areas;
- Inclusion of poor, women, dalit and Janajati in vulnerability, hazard and risk assessment and mapping.

Trainings on efficient and productive agricultural practices: The proposed output level activity is to conduct twenty community training events to encourage consolidated land management, prevent land fragmentation and encourage efficient and productive agricultural practices.

Positive impact:

- Enhanced skill of communities on efficient and productive agriculture practices;
- Increase agriculture production;
- Discourage unsustainable harvesting of forest resources.

Areas for improvement:

- No visualization of training participants;
- Participations by mainly local elites may not be able to tackle the issues and concerns.

Suggestions:

- Ensure participation of 50% poor, women, dalit and Janajati in all training events;
- Conduct training events convenient to women and poor for their full participation;
- Conducted training in simple local language;
- Ensure new migrants participation in training to learn farming in Churia range.

Community grants to improve land management in agriculture sector: The project proposed to promote fifteen community grants in 4 districts for priority community programs for improve land management within the agriculture sector.

Positive impact:

- Improved farm land yield better production;
- Provide opportunity to poor communities who lack resources to improve agricultural land;
- Reduce pressure on forest and its resources.

Area for improvement:

- No visualization of how and for whom the grant will be awarded;
- Possibility of elite capture as poor has less land.

Suggestions:

- Ensure 50% of the grant is provided to poor, women, dalit and Janajati;
- Develop well defined pro poor criteria for grant selection;
- Ensure selection committee has 50% representative of women, poor, dalit and Janajati members.

Capacity development of local communities and government extension services to implement, sustain these practices, monitor the outcome and enhance knowledge transfer for decision support:

Positive impact:

- Enhanced capacity of local communities and government extension services to sustain, monitor and transfer knowledge on the best practices and innovative ideas learned through community grants;

- Improved agriculture practices in an organized manner;
- Increase knowledge on agriculture practices for better decision making.

Area for improvement:

- It has not quantified who consists of local communities;
- Number of local community members and government extension services are not identified for the training;
- May lead to elite capture;
- In Nepal, "community", "user group", "people", are vague words without spelling out the actual target beneficiaries. In such cases, the poor, women, dalits and the marginalized janajati are excluded from the benefits and elites capture the resources and opportunities.

Suggestion:

- Ensure 50% participants are poor, women, dalit and Janajati;
- Develop criteria for participants' selection that are pro-poor and GESI inclusive;
- Conduct training events convenient to women, poor, dalit and Janajati (time, location and language).

2.2.2 Project Component 2: Integrated landscape management in the wider Churia Range forested areas

Forest degradation is due to poverty in Churia range. People migrated from hills to Churia range encroach upon and clear forests on unstable slopes, engage in unstable extraction of timber and non-timber forest product and free graze livestock on steep slopes. Unless this forest degradation is stopped there will be continues loss of ecosystem functions and degradation of environmental flows and services increasing natural disaster. So there is an urgent need for sustainable forest management and forest resources use and to provide alternative livelihood opportunities to alleviate poverty among local people.

Component 2 aims to maintain or improve forest areas, ecosystem flows and services through conservation actions and community forest management. It is expected that 5,000 ha. of forest areas in project sites will be restored and conserved.

The gaps identified under the proposed outputs level activities are as:

Under 2.1.1, it has not quantified how many local community groups will be supported and how gender and social inclusion will be integrated. A total of 40 forest sites within 3 districts out of 4 pilot districts will be supported. It is not clear which 3 districts are chosen.

Under 2.1.2, It is proposed that seventy alternative energy source units will be distributed. It has failed to identify who will receive this support.

Under 2.1.3, six hundred households in 4 districts will be supported with alternative livelihoods. Who will receive the support is not clear and how many women, poor, dalits and Janajati household will be benefitting.

Under 2.1.4, two workshops will be held with local authorities. Number of participants and who from the local authorities will participate in the workshop is missing.

Under 2.1.5, ten community grants are proposed but how many groups or individual will receive the grant is missing. It also has not pointed out how women, poor, Dalit and Janajati will be included.

Component 2 has 1 proposed outcome – 2.1: Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities. Under this outcome it has five proposed outputs level activities. All these five outputs level activities analyses from environment and social aspects indicates that it has less negative impact environmentally. Socially one of the activities dealing with conserving, managing and restoring forest areas in strategic location does seem to have social impact on the poorest of the poor communities.

Support local communities to conserve, manage and restore forest areas in strategic locations in 40 forested sites within 3 of the 4 pilot districts:

Positive impact:

- 40 forest sites consisting of 5000 ha. Of forest land will be conserved in 3 project districts;
- Degraded forest land will be improved through forestry interventions program such as community forestry, lease hold forestry and collaborative forest management;
- Forest management and conservation through community participation;
- Improve biodiversity, increase forestation through forest management and reduction in natural calamity like landslide, soil erosion etc;
- Increase wildlife habitation due to conservation of wildlife corridor;
- Increase national economic from tourism sector as well as improve local economy from tourism.

Area for improvement:

- The selected forestry sites (strategic location) are settled or by the poorest of the poor such as Dalits and Janajati;
- Poorest of the poor involvement in forestry program is less likely due to various rules and regulation of the forestry projects as well as time constrain;
- Conservation of strategic sites and location will debar poor communities in accessing resources and services from the sites/strategic location;
- This will increase poverty as poor (women, dalit and Janajati) who depends daily on forest resources now will not be able to access the forest resources;

- On the other hand the poor will start to access resources from other forest areas that could be further away from their settlement not reached by the human;
- This will increase burden to poor and women as now they will need to travel further away;
- Another social factor is that poorest community living in strategic location will be displaced from the settlements that are known to them;
- Community forestry issues – elite captured; failed to address inclusion of poorest and landless; restriction of members without land certificate; limited resource distribution; and exclusion of those HHs from Tarai who were previous users of the forest;
- Leasehold forestry issues – target below poverty line; allocation of degraded land needs time for production; and lease is in male membership.
- Collaborative forestry issue – decision are dominated by government officials; Unscientific management of forest; gender issues not well tackled; long bureaucratic process to access forest products by the poorest.

Suggestions:

- Promote livelihood support and other project support (community grant, training, irrigation, alternative energy etc) to the poorest (women, dalit and janajat) to participate in the forestry project;
- Ensure 80% representation of women, poor, dalit and Janajati in user groups and 50% in executive committee;
- Provision of affirmative action's for poorest member to access forest resources;
- Ensure rules and regulations are pro-poor and gender and social inclusion inclusive;
- Ensure alternative source of livelihood for the poorest by diverting livelihood support, alternative energy support, training, awareness etc for their participation in the forestry programme.

Promotion of at least seventy alternative energy sources in 4 districts to reduce fuel wood consumption:

Positive impact:

- Communities will benefit from 70 alternative energy sources in all piloted districts;
- It is estimated by the alternative energy project (Nepal) decrease in 30% of fuel woods consumption due to improved cooked stoves (ICS);
- Improved forestation and decrease deforestation;
- Decrease workload of women in collecting fuel wood;
- Women's time saved encourage them to participate in social and development activities to increase their participating and representation in meaningful decision making position;
- Improve the health situation of women and children due to less smoke in kitchen, clean and well managed kitchen;

- The introduction of solar lights will provide longer hours to work at night time and will support children to study longer hrs. in the evening.

Area for improvement:

- Biogas not feasible with hard core poor families due to lack of enough space to install biogas;
- Lack of clear criteria for support;
- Unavailability of pro poor financial institutions;
- Sustainability of alternative energy is an issue after termination of the project.

Suggestions:

- Define subsidized pro poor criteria;
- Link with financial institutions for bigger coverage.

Six hundred households in 4 districts are supported with alternative livelihoods based on sustainable use of forest-based resources:

Positive impact:

- Six hundred households (HHs) in all piloted districts will benefit from alternative livelihood schemes;
- Decrease dependency on forest resources and encourage sustainable harvesting of forest resources;
- Increase income, improves living status of the community and people involved in such enterprises;
- Maintain social harmony by creating local employment for the youth who can earn living from their own home town;
- Support on livelihood activities will maintain and retain traditional skill, knowledge and culture of the indigenous people.

Area for improvement:

- Lack of business plan and market linkages;
- Quality of the production to compete market;
- Poor and women less participation due to cultural practices of working in non economic sector;

Suggestions:

- Ensure 80% of the target groups consist of poor , women, dalit and Janajati;
- Assess feasibility of enterprises prior to support;
- Ensure traditional caste groups are the target beneficiaries;
- Provide training on micro enterprises that are economically viable for women and poor;
- Provide capacity to link the enterprise with market and financial institution;
- Ensure quality by providing refresher training and capacity to assess own quality;
- Support group based enterprises for women and poor where feasible.

Two workshops to disseminate and support local authorities in policy implementation related to community, collaborative and lease hold forestry programme to enhance the engagement of communities in restoration of degraded forest lands:

Positive impact:

- Local authorities will be aware of policy related to community, collaborative and lease hold forestry program in 4 piloted districts;
- The policy orientation on forestry related program will provide a strong base to local authorities to support the local communities to be engaged in forestry related program to restore degraded land and conserve forest;
- Conducive environment will be created between local authorities and user groups;
- The communities will directly be involved in the project activities leading towards sustainability and ownership of the project activities.

Area for improvement:

- Participants of the workshop not clear;
- Lack of clear understanding on policy as such workshop needs follow up support.

Suggestions:

- Follow up and provide refresher training on the policy to the local authority;
- Develop capacity of local authority to internalize the policy and implement it;
- Ensure the policies are adhered by the local authorities.

Ten community grants awarded in 4 districts to promote priority community program for improved land management in the forestry sector:

Positive impact:

- Communities will have support through community grant to improve land management in forestry sector;
- Increase awareness and knowledge of communities on land management process;
- Increase forest production for communities (ground grass, fodder, spices, fruits etc).

Area for improvement:

- No visualization as what community grants consists of may lead to conflict in community;
- Lack of procedure for awarding the grant;
- Possibility of elite capture.

Suggestion:

- Develop criteria for awarding grant;
- Ensure women, dalit and Janajati groups receive at least 50% of the grant;
- Monitor the programme to provide feedback and suggestions;
- Disseminate lesson learning of the programme to other groups.

2.2.3 Project Component 3 Cross-sectoral coordination and local community engagement

There are no clear policies for land-use and management and uncertain land use and land tenure issues. No inter-sectoral coordination in land allocation for various purposes to different

groups. The survey department allocates forest land – including land already allocated to community forestry without consultation with forest departments, leading to land conflict and insecure land tenure.

The component is designed to rectify relevant policy gaps and enable inter-sectoral coordination to provide secure land tenure, planned land use, land allocation and pursue its institutionalization and implementation. The expected outcome is to enable cross-sectoral coordination and community engagement to avoid competing land uses and negative trade off for sustainable land management within the piloted districts.

The component has 1 outcome and five proposed outputs level activities to achieve the outcome. The gaps in the output level activities are as:

Under 3.1.1, capacity of 9 institutions, and institute mechanism and for coordinated, inter-sectoral land and resource use plans will be build.

The institutions are not specified and numbers of trained persons are also not identified. In the M&E plan it has identified 30-40 government officials capacity will be enhanced. Is this the same group or does it consists of local institutions?

Under 3.1.2, thirty CBO representatives are capacitated through landscape management job training and internships to enhance the enabling environment for land conservation in Churia Range.

It does not specify who the thirty CBO representatives will consist of. How many women, Dalit and Janjati will be included must be specified.

Under 3.1.3, Support district- level land use planning and analysis to identify important and sensitive areas for restoration and conservation management and integrate into district land – use plans in 4 piloted districts.

It does not quantify the areas of identification for restoration and conservation.

Under 3.1.4, Support government of Nepal to develop localized land –use policies/plans for sustainable land management in 4 piloted districts. This will be done in consultation with local government and community groups.

Who will consist of community groups is not specified. Are they purely community based groups or will they be representatives from civil society groups?

Under 3.1.5, Development of IEC materials on sustainable land management will be disseminated through twenty-four awareness program and media interaction in 4 piloted districts.

Who and how many will participate in the awareness program is not mentioned. What does the awareness programs consists of day celebration, mass orientation, door to door campaign,

distribution of IEC materials at the group level, community individual and school etc, FM radio program etc.

Component 3 has 1 outcome 3.1: Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management. Under this outcome it has five outputs level proposed activities. Two activities, dealing on identification of sensitive areas for restoration and conservation and the localized policy/plan on land use will have social impact on the communities due to the rules and regulation that needs to be followed. Further it will displace the settlers from the areas with the new policy and plan in place.

Facilitate capacity building in 9 institution and institute mechanisms and forum for coordinated, inter-sectoral land and resource use plans:

Positive impact:

- Nine institutional capacities will be enhanced to make decision on inter-sectoral land and resource use plans;
- The project will contribute in inter-sectoral coordination regarding the land allocation that has so far been done without coordinating with concerned departments and stakeholders;
- This will provide a forum for initiating program related discussion and dialogue on the existing problem and to act on the problem in a joint manner;
- Land and resource use plan will be developed for reference among the institutions.

Area for improvement:

- Land and resource use plan may not be acted upon;
- Each institution will have its own mandate so there is difficulty in coordination and cooperation.

Suggestions:

- Ensure land and resource plan is strictly followed by concern authority;
- The forum makes regular follow up to ensure the decisions are acted upon.

Thirty CBOs representatives capacitated through integrated landscape management job training and internships to enhance the enabling environment for land conservation in Churia range:

Positive impact:

- At lease thirty representatives of CBOs capacity enhanced to work on land conservation in Churia in a coordinated manner;
- A network of thirty CBOs will be formed to work and advocate on Churia issues;
- Local CBOs will act jointly to put pressure on relevant line agencies and department to resolve problems/issues through dialogue and discussion creating enabling environment to act jointly for land conservation;

- Local level human resources are developed and will jointly work for conservation of Churia range in the 4 piloted districts.

Area for improvement:

- It has not specified if women, Dalit and Janajati will be representing the CBOs;
- It has also not specified how many persons will be capacitated from 30 CBOs in 4 districts.

Suggestions:

- Ensure 50% of CBOs are from women, dalit and janajat. If not, ensure their representations in the training;
- Provide mentoring support to the trained CBOs to continuously advocate on the issues;
- Provide support to lobby the Churia issues at various levels.

Support the development of district level land use planning and analyses to identify important and sensitive areas for restoration and conservation management and integrate into district land –use plans in all 4 Churia Range districts:

Positive impact:

- A district level land use plan will be in place in the 4 piloted districts for easy reference;
- The plan will support to identify important and sensitive areas for restoration and conservation of forest area;
- All agencies, development partners, NGOs and CBOs will work based on the land use plan in the planned manner to avoid duplication and work in a harmonized manner for greater impact.

Area for improvement:

- Plan may not be supportive to poor people issue;
- It has not quantified the areas to be identified;
- Plan may not be followed;
- Poor people settled in the area will be affected or displaced with the implementation of the plan.

Suggestions:

- Develop the plan through consultation with the community members to incorporate their issues;
- Ensure the plan is followed by all concerned stakeholders;
- Provide back-stopping support at DDC to implement the plan

Support the Government of Nepal to develop and localized land use policies/plans for sustainable land management in 4 piloted Churia districts in consultation with local government and community groups, and inclusion of multi stakeholder representation in management and planning committee:

Positive impact:

- Participatory land use plan and policy for sustainable land management in 4 piloted Churia will be in place;
- The policy will be owned by the local government and the community for effective implementation;
- The plan and policy will reduce conflict on land tenure and illegal occupation of forest land for various purposes;
- Sustainable use and management of the land will provide social and economic benefit to the districts and communities;
- Policy will reduce conflict and maintain social harmony among the local communities;
- The sustainable use of land will stop forest degradation that will not only benefit the local communities but also communities that are living downstream in the Tarai and Bhabar;
- Management and planning committee consisting of multi-stakeholder will create dialogue among the various stakeholders to use land policies and plans.

Area for improvement:

- Plan implementation may take longer time;
- Possibility of elite from the community groups involvement in plan development;
- Plan may not address issues of poor, women, dalit and Janajati;
- Lack of gender and social inclusion in multi stakeholder representation in management and planning committee.

Suggestions:

- Ensure 50% of community groups for consultation consists of women, dalit and Janajati groups if not ensure their representations from the community group;
- Ensure issues of poor, women, dalit and Janajati is considered in the plan;
- Ensure 50% representation from gender and social inclusion in multi stakeholder planning and management committee.

Develop informational, educational and communication materials on sustainable land management to be disseminated in twenty four awareness programs and media interactions in 4 piloted districts:

Positive impact:

- Informative information extension and communication (IEC) materials on sustainable land management in place in 4 piloted districts;
- Awareness on sustainable land management will inform citizens and community to understand and support the land use policies/plans of the districts;
- IEC materials will create awareness on local communities to understand the issues and lobby for the issue;

- Media will highlight the issues creating mass awareness and pressurize public and relevant stakeholders on the existing problems/issues and on land use policies and plans.

Area for improvement:

- Few number of mass awareness may not educate local communities who are illiterate and lack time for participation;
- No target identified for proposed awareness programme;
- Number of participation from women, poor, Dalit and Janajati is missing. May have adverse impact as the important groups may not have their participation;
- What does the awareness programs consists of day celebration, mass orientation, door to door campaign, distribution of IEC materials at the group level, community individual and school etc, FM radio program etc.

Suggestions:

- Clarify the target groups of awareness programme;
- Ensure 50% of target groups participants are poor, women, dalit, Janajati;
- Ensure 50% consists of local elites, political party representatives, activists, stakeholder, school teachers etc;
- Ensure the IEC materials are with pictures that can be understood by all;
- Ensure it is pasted it strategic location for wider dissemination.

2.2.4 Project Component 4: Monitoring and Evaluation

The project will employ participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process to monitor the project results and activities. An M&E framework will be developed for monitoring the project throughout the project cycle ensuring feedback mechanism at different implementation levels. Monitoring will be conducted at 4 levels – community level, project or site level, project/program or central level and donor or funding agency level.

The proposed project component on monitoring and evaluation has one outcome:

Outcome 4.1: Participatory monitoring and evaluation

Under this proposed outcome it has three outputs level activities. The project has well monitoring system in place. It will carry out monitoring at 4 levels as mentioned above. Further it has well developed system to monitor its specific components such as biodiversity target monitoring; best practices and alternative technology; agro-pastoral and forest ecosystem services and flows; land management planning and policies; and cross-sectoral coordination and community engagement. This is a technical monitoring system the project has proposed. From the social aspect it is important that at the community level monitoring, the local communities has to be involved in the monitoring of its progress and results to be informed on the status of the project and make correction on the gaps identified through the process.

Project monitoring system operating systematically providing information on project progress in meeting project output and outcome targets.

Positive impact:

- Project monitoring system in place;
- Monitoring results feeding on project progress to analyze output and outcome targets are met;
- Monitoring will help the implementing government ministries and WWF Nepal to track the progress and act on the gap for immediate correction.

Area of improvement:

- No local institutions representative in the monitoring for knowledge transfer;
- Lack of gender and social inclusion representation may lead only to technical monitoring of the project;
- Lack of qualitative indicators developed to monitor the status of GESI in the program.

Suggestions:

- Transfer the skill to local institutions by ensuring their participation;
- Ensure community members are involved in community level monitoring system;
- Ensure representation from Gender and social inclusion in the monitoring team;
- Ensure M&E framework and plan have the GESI qualitative and quantitative indicators.

Timely submission of GEF LD Tracking Tool:

Positive impact:

- Donor partner will be updated and informed on progress status;
- Provide timely feedback and suggestions based on the progress status by donor partner.

Area of improvement:

None

Suggestions:

None

Final evaluation carried out and reports disseminated in a timely manner:

Positive impact:

- Final evaluation results and recommendations available to concerned stakeholders, implementers to assess the result of the project;
- Sharing of project results and learning will inform the stakeholders and the implementing ministries on Churia project for future learning and action required.

Area of improvement:

- Evaluation may only be from technical side.

Suggestions:

- Ensure social and gender expert is included.

3. Project design from Gender and Social inclusion: The proposed project is designed from technical aspect as it is a technical project. It has tried to incorporate gender mainstreaming and social inclusion (GESI) in the document by giving priority to gender and social inclusion in the entire project objective. It has stated that this will ensure equitable social and economic benefits and respect for dignity and human rights. It has proposed an institutional framework for mainstreaming gender that will ensure women's participation and provide equal opportunity in all project activities, consultation process, in maintaining, collecting and storing gender disaggregated data.

The project has various interventions like community, leasehold and collaborative forestry management; develop capacity of local communities in sustainable land and water management where gender and social inclusion will be given priority. However, the project components and its output related activities are formulated from technical prospective. It has not focused visualization to include poor, women, Dalit and Janajati in the project activities.

Positive impact:

- Project document has tried to capture GESI by referring it in one section;
- Entire project objective will be sensitive towards gender and social inclusion;
- Institutional framework in place to mainstream gender;
- Disaggregated data maintain.

Area of improvement:

- Lack of specific gender and social inclusion participation in project activities may regard the project as insensitive towards gender and social inclusion;
- Gender and social inclusion focal point needs to internalize the GESI process and provide constant feedback on the project;
- Lack of GESI qualitative indicator hamper in analyzing the project form gender and social inclusion prospective;

Suggestions:

- Ensure all project activities have at least 50% representatives from gender and social inclusion;
- Ensure gender and social inclusion focal point provides constructive feedback to the project; Enhance capacity of gender and social inclusion focal point through coaching support from GESI expert;
- Consult gender strategy that is closely related with project for Hariyo Ban project;
- Project team should include gender and social expert to guide the project and its implementing partners (ministries) that are all technical and male dominated.

4. Conclusion:

The proposed project is designed as a technical project with little input from the social aspect. Usually forestry is considered to be technical that deals more on forest protection, conservation,

and management. The proposed project as per the requirement of WWF policy (Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy) needs to identify if there is any unintended adverse environmental and social consequences that have negative impact due to the implementation of the proposed project. Further in line with WWF and GEF policy it is essential to ensure that poor, women and indigenous people from the project area have equitable social and economic benefits and respect for dignity and human rights. Based on these assumptions the review was undertaken. The review has identified gaps in the project design and has come up with recommendations to be acted upon during the inception and implementation phase of the proposed project.

The proposed project is technically sound and has come up with 4 main components to meet the objective of the piloted project so that leanings from the project can be upscale for future implementation of similar projects/program.

The four components of the projects has proposed outputs level activities that needs to be spelled out clearly from gender and social inclusion prospective.

5. Recommendations:

The recommendations are provided by components at the outcome level. As the review was undertaken from social aspect recommendation on project design from gender and social inclusion is also provided.

Component 1, outcome 1.1:

SALT technology:

- This is new technology that requires understanding to be fully adoptable in the local communities. It is therefore, recommended that the local residents consisting of women, dalit and Janajati must be thoroughly oriented for adaptation.
- It is also essential that they have their representation in the user committee as well.

Mixed cropping:

- Women are mainly involved in agriculture. It is recommended that at least 50% of women including poor, dalit and Janajati be provided training on the mixed cropping system.
- It is also essential to have technical resource person to provide services for the local communities in this activity. It is recommended to tie up the community with government services. If not, it is recommended that the local resource person (RP) be trained and RP is inclusive of gender and social inclusion.

Water collection & storage:

- It is recommended that women, poor, dalit and Janajati be consulted in identifying water storage point.
- It is recommended that in the user committee 50% of gender and social inclusion must have their representation.

- It is recommended that along with storage points individual rain water collection technology also be promoted as it will support the system.
- It is also recommended that appropriate technology like conservation ponds be promoted to capture rain water and flash floods in the Churia hills.

Bio-engineering:

- Adaptations of bio-engineering are a challenge for women and poor. It is recommended that their participation be ensured for sustainability. Women, dalit and Janajati involvement in this activity must be ensured.

Outcome 1.2

Identification of pasture:

- Grazing pasture will be identified through consultations. It is recommended that at 50% of women, dalit and Janajati have their representation and meaningful participation.
- It is recommended that in the pasture committee women, dalit and Janajati have 50% of their representation

Identification of disaster prone areas:

- The poor live in disaster prone areas. It is recommended that the information be widely shared with them so that they can decide on their free will to move out from such risky area.
- It is recommended that they should be consulted and involved in the identification process.

20 community training (consolidated land management, fragmentation & productive agriculture):

- It is recommended that all training events must ensure 50% poor, women, dalit and janajati participation.
- It is recommended to hold training that are convenient to poor, women, dalit and Janajati for their full participation
- It is recommended that training be conducted in simple language that could be understood by poor, women, dalit and Janajati who may be illiterate.

15 agriculture community grant for land improvement:

- The grant is not visualized clearly. It is recommended that clear criteria for awarding grant be made.
- It is recommended that poor, women, dalit and Janajati be awarded the grant as they lack resources and skill to improve their land

Build capacity of local communities and government extension services:

- It is recommended that local communities consist of women, dalit and Janajati for enhancing their capacity.

Component 2:

Identification of strategic location:

- Poor are settled in such location. It is recommended that they be involved in identification process.
- Project intervention will displace and debar poor to access resources from the strategic areas. It is recommended that other project interventions be provided such as support livelihood support; community grants, ICS, solar etc to compensate for their losses.

Alternative energy source to reduce fuel wood consumption:

- It is recommended that poor, women, dalit and Janajati be given preference.
- It is also recommended that poorest get high subsidy to encourage them to adopt the new technology

Livelihood support for 600 households:

- It is recommended that the poorest of the poor including women, dalit and Janajati be provided forest based micro enterprise training and support them with livelihood grant to implement what they have learned.
- It is recommended that livelihood support grant be provided to traditional skill people such as NTFP processing, wood carving, lokta paper making, etc.
- It is also recommended that they be taught business plan and ensure market linkages through need assessment.

Two workshops held for local authorities regarding policy implementation related to community, lease hold and collaborative forestry

- It is recommended that the local authorities (frequent changes) should be followed up and provided refresher training on the policy for implementation and action required.
- It is also recommended that the local authorities' capacity must be developed to internalize the policy.

Ten community grants awarded in 4 districts for improved land management within forestry sector

- It is recommended that for the effective use of the grant gender and social inclusive criteria should be developed for awarding the grant;

- It is recommended that the grant should be monitored to provide feedback and suggestions for corrections and improvement.
- It also recommended disseminating lesson learning of the grant programme to other groups.

Component 3:

Facilitate capacity building in nine institutions, and institute mechanism and fora for coordinated, inter-sectoral land and resource use plans

- It is recommended that to ensure land and resource plan is strictly followed by concern authority.
- It is also recommended that the forum actively follow up the concerned authorities to ensure the decisions are acted upon.

Thirty CBOs representatives capacitated through integrated landscape management job training and internships to enhance the enabling environment for land conservation in Churia range:

- Ensure 50% of CBOs are from women, dalit and janajat. If not, ensure their representations in the training;
- Provide mentoring support to the trained CBOs to continuously advocate on the issues;
- Provide support to lobby the Churia issues at various levels.

Support the development of district level land use planning and analyses to identify important and sensitive areas for restoration and conservation management and integrate into district land –use plans in all 4 Churia Range districts:

- It is recommended to consult community members to incorporate their issues into district land use plans.
- It is also recommended to provide back-stopping support to the concerned district to ensure that the plan is implemented and followed by all concerned stakeholders;

Support the Government of Nepal to develop and localized land use policies/plans for sustainable land management in 4 piloted Churia districts in consultation with local government and community groups, and inclusion of multi stakeholder representation in management and planning committee:

- It is recommended that to include 50% of community groups for consultation consists of women, dalit and Janajati groups if not ensure their representations from the community group.
- It is recommended that the plan incorporate issues of poor, women, dalit and Janajati.
- It is also recommended to ensure representation from gender and social inclusion in multi stakeholder planning and management committee.

Develop informational, educational and communication materials on sustainable land management to be disseminated in twenty four awareness programs and media interactions in 4 piloted districts:

- It is recommended to include equal number of male and female participants in the awareness programme consisting from of poor, dalit, Janajati, local elites, representative of political parties, activists, school teachers and relevant stakeholder to create awareness on sustainable land management.
- It is recommended that IEC materials in print form that is easy to understand should be disseminated and posted in strategic location.
- It is also recommended that the media should not only consists of local but it should also consists of regional level media for wider coverage on sustainable land management

Component 4:

Project monitoring system operating systematically providing information on project progress in meeting project output and outcome targets.

- It is recommended that at the community level monitoring representation from gender and social inclusion must be ensured in the monitoring team;
- Data should be collected, maintained and reported based on disaggregated data of gender and social inclusion;
- It is recommended that the monitoring skill be transfer to local institutions;
- It is also recommended to incorporate GESI qualitative indicators in the M&E framework and plan.

Final evaluation carried out and reports disseminated in a timely manner:

- It is recommended that the evaluation team should also include social and gender expert to evaluate the project from gender and social inclusion prospective

Gender and social inclusion

Following recommendations based on the analysis are provided to make the project GMSI inclusive.

- It is recommended to focus on women, poor, dalit and Janajati in all project activities.
- It is recommended to include women, poor dalit and jjanajati in stakeholder consultation from the community level

Terms of Reference for Project Social Assessment (SIA)

A. Background

Within the context of our mission, it is WWF's policy to ensure that any unintended adverse environmental and social consequences of proposed projects and programs are identified and evaluated by WWF, and that appropriate measures to avoid or minimize environmental and social impacts are put in place when necessary. The World Wildlife Fund, Inc. (WWF) Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy requires an assessment of any potentially negative impacts that are identified during the initial Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) screening phase. Assessment recommendations will be reviewed and where appropriate incorporated into an Environmental and Social Management and Mitigation Plan (ESMP). ESMPs are intended to strengthen environmental and social safeguards and integrate them into project designs.

The following terms of reference (TOR) outlines the ESIA screening categories flagged during review and expectations for the assessment.

B. Project Design and Flagged Activities

The proposed project "Sustainable Land Management in the Churia Range, Nepal" consists of the following three components: sustainable agricultural and livestock management for the conservation of ecosystem services, integrated land management to conserve forested areas, and capacity development for the government agencies and local communities to maintain practices. The initial ESIA project screening triggered no further environmental assessment or mitigation needs, as impacts are expected to be small-scale and positive. Specific project elements that have been flagged as potential areas of risks for social impacts are as follows:

1. The project includes proposed activities to develop and strengthen community-based forestry management and small-scale reforestation efforts. Those activities are anticipated to temporarily restrict access to forest areas during the implementation of reforestation activities, and may change or restrict long-term access to forest resources as a result of enhanced community stewardship.
2. Project implementation is likely to have an impact on indigenous peoples. WWF endorses the provisions concerning indigenous people contained in the ILO Convention 169¹ and is requiring an assessment of project impacts on indigenous peoples.

¹ WWF International 2008. Indigenous Peoples and Conservation: WWF Statement of Principles. Gland, Switzerland: WWF International http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/partnerships/indigenous_people

3. Project staff will provide technical assistant (TA) for project implementation by Nepal ministries, capacity building at national and district levels, land use planning, as well as agricultural and livestock sector reforms. These resulting changes to land management practices are anticipated to have impacts on local communities and user groups.
4. Project design must include gender and social safeguards to ensure benefits are distributed equitably and that women and marginalized groups are both meaningfully engaged in project design and not negatively impacted by project implementation or results.

C. Scope of ESIA- Social Assessment

1. Consultant will conduct an initial assessment of the project design that includes at minimum:
 - a. Review of program document and annexes
 - b. Review of stakeholder consultation and participation in the planning process as well as any future consultations incorporated into the project plans.
 - c. Assess nature and extent of the potential social impacts identified under “flagged activities” above, especially as they relate to indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups.
 - d. Assess gender integration in the project design and if necessary suggest areas for improvement.
 - e. Identify information gaps and areas of high risk for social impacts, if any exist.
 - f. Summarize initial assessment results and any necessary proposed on-site assessments in an email communication to the ESIA Coordinator. If no additional actions or site visits are required, the assessment will be considered complete.
2. Upon review and approval from the ESIA Coordinator, the consultant may be asked to conduct on-site assessments of high-risk project sites or vulnerable communities. The on-site assessments may include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Identify locations and consult with a diversity of stakeholders on the potential social impacts/risks
 - b. Review consultation documentation and identified risks with a diversity of stakeholders in local communities and indigenous groups. The review will aim to collect and incorporate their feedback on the identified project impacts and proposed mitigation plans.
 - c. Verify that planning was conducted in a participatory manner and is reasonably aligned with disparate community stakeholder perceptions and attitudes regarding the proposed project.
 - d. Review and verify if disclosures of the project screening and classification were completed. Assess if communities were provided opportunities to review and respond to the disclosure.

- e. Assess general support and acceptance of the proposed project with local communities ensuring that women and marginalized groups have opportunities to provide feedback.
3. Provide recommendations for the project design and monitoring plans to ensure local project stakeholders and indigenous groups, including vulnerable and marginalized community members, will have adequate opportunities to contribute, provide feedback and input into the adaptive management cycle.
4. Provide recommendations for necessary reduction or mitigation actions to be incorporated into project plans.

D. Skills Required

The consultant should have 8-10 years of experience in social assessment and power analysis, particularly engaging marginalized communities, indigenous peoples, and gender integration. Required experience with participatory consultations and in the use of consultation instruments. Consultants with 3-5 years field experience in the analysis of field data are preferred. Experience with UN, GEF, and other multilateral organizational policies regarding Social Safeguards and Indigenous Peoples preferred.

E. Time Schedule

The consultant will complete the social impact assessment and submit the final report prior to June 28, 2013. This assessment will include a field visit to the Nepal offices and may include project site visits.

F. Deliverables

1. Initial Communication of Desk Assessment - June 14th
2. Draft Social Impact Assessment – June 21th
3. Final Social Impact Assessment – June 28th