



RESEARCH ARTICLE

STATUS AND BARRIERS OF COMMUNITY FOREST ENTERPRISES IN MID-HILLS: A CASE STUDY FROM THREE CFEs OF KASKI, PARBAT AND TANAHUN DISTRICTS

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ABSTRACT

This research study examines financial status, policy and institutional barriers and possible intervention for effective functioning of Community Forest Enterprise (CFEs). The study was carried out in three CFEs: NamunaBanpale Community Forest Enterprise, PargatisilAllo Enterprise and Mountain Tanahun Community Bel and Fruit Processing Industry of the Kaski, Parbat and Tanahun districts with the objective of exploring current cost and revenue of CF enterprise, barrier faced by CFEs and identify possible interventions for effective functioning. Key informant interview and focus group discussion were carried out to collect required information. The data recorded were analysed by using Microsoft-Excel. The study revealed that the forest-based enterprise establishment by the initiative of community forest user group barely get success unless an external donor agency support their programs specially during establishing years. The study found that the establishment of enterprises provides income opportunities, improve living of poor family however, the income generated is significantly low compare to its investment. Among the enterprises, Bel enterprise was found to be functioning well compared to other two. The study also assessed that enterprise operated by a group reduces responsibility of each individual towards the enterprise which is higher when operated by single individual. There are no any incentives for community forest enterprise in the policy level, no any mechanism to regulate market, providing access to the market for the enterprise in the remote area, discounts in taxes. People involved in the enterprise were found slowly losing their interest and expectation from the enterprise as inefficient management of the enterprises to bring all members together. To minimize the declining interest of people in the enterprise and to incorporate them together in the enterprises the study found out the seasonal enterprise should extend and need to operate in regular base this would increase people participation as they don't need to focus on other activities to make their living. Furthermore, the entrepreneurs of CFEs should aware about the market demand, marketing information, efficient and effective techniques, managerial techniques, and record keeping.

KEYWORDS

Community Forest Enterprises (CFEs), Entrepreneurs, Revenue, Donor agency, Incentives, Intervention.

1. INTRODUCTION

The community Forestry in Nepal refers to forest management that ensures ecological sustainability and local community benefits as central goals, with some degree of responsibility and authority for forest management formally vested in the community (Charnley and Poe, 2007). In community forest local community participate for the mutual benefits of forest and people (Pathak et al., 2017). Nepalese livelihood depends on subsistence agriculture and forest products but not benefited with extra income (Kanel and Niraula, 2004).

People's livelihood would not be easily uplifted without maximum utilization of available resources. When resources, community and forest-based enterprise interlinked to work in a harmony creates an ample opportunity to make meaningful income to the rural community for their living. The success of community forestry is observable in terms of restoring degraded land and habitats and increasing supply of forest products like timber and firewood mainly (Shrestha et al., 2010). However, the needs of community are changing with the time. Community

Forestry in Nepal is promoting enterprise development activities to improve the livelihoods (Pandit et al., 2009).

Community forest enterprise (CFE) is a forest-based enterprise that includes the activities that use any products from forest for generating extra income to the users of community forest (as shown in Figure 1). CFE is an entity under taking commercial exchange based on forest or trees overseen by community that generates and redistributes profits within the community (Macqueen, 2008a). Nepal is a hub for medicinal and valuable NTFPs. Many communities depend on the collection, harvesting, processing and marketing of NTFPs for their living which is a kind of forest-based enterprise. Other than collecting firewood, grass, fodder, timber used in daily life, community forestry can also operate forest-based industry to generate job opportunities and economical income to uplift livelihood of user group members (CF Guideline, 2014). This clearly shows developing CFEs based on valuable forest products in community dependent forest would help to enhance extra income other than from limited subsistence agriculture.

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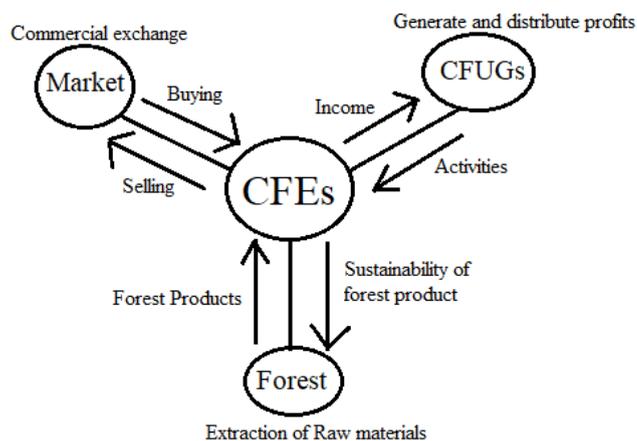


Figure 1: Concept of Forest Based Enterprises

Nepal government realize to develop CFEs in community forest. Thus, government circulate different formal and informal orders and prepared the acts, policies, regulations, directives, guidelines, gazette, notifications, etc. that have a direct implication with regard to CFEs and their operation. The expectation behind this action is to involve people in conservation, protection and utilization of forest products for economic benefits of local users. CFEs are not simply about subsistence but also include commercial exchange, distribute benefits among members, practice democratic decision-making structure that do not necessarily won the forest, CFEs need not necessarily carry out all the management work and functions necessary to bring a product or service to market and CFEs help to transfer of responsibilities of protection, management and utilization of resources to communities (Macqueen, 2008b).

However, lack of appropriate mechanism to access business skills, financial services and benefit sharing among the members or stakeholders are the important institutional issues for the sustainability of forest-based enterprises (Khanal and Maharjan, 2010). Although CFEs provide social safety nets that foster decentralization, tenure and access rights, community cohesion, and political empowerment of local people; many community forests still are not able to operate CFEs (Tomaselli et al., 2011). CFEs can be registered and operated similar to those of existing enterprises that have been operated as per Industrial Enterprise Act 2017. In addition to that, additional condition should be followed which require to receive an approval letter from the Ministry of Forest and Environment (MoFE) for registration of forest-based enterprises that depend on raw material to be collected from national forests.

It is hard to collect such approval from the central agencies specifically for the establishment and operation of CFEs for rural community and locals. Policy hurdles in different stages, confusion/contradiction about appropriate model, forms of enterprises, and lack of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge for access to market, technology and finance are observed as technical obstacles (Rai et al., 2018). These problems are rooted from the disputing meaning about forest resources between bureaucratise and forest dwellers. The environment-related legislations have given more emphasis on protection and conservation of forest resources while the enterprise-related legislations have given emphasis to the sustainable utilization of forest product through enterprise, trade and business with due consideration of potential environmental impacts (Paudel et al., 2018).

The community forest enterprise may not sustain when cost exceeds the benefits. Benefit – cost analysis is required for identifying, measuring and comparing benefits and cost of an investment project or program like CF enterprises (Campbell and Brown, 2003). In Nepal, the scope of CF has been significantly widened. The activities CF focuses on its earlier time on forest protection and subsistence use but nowadays focus to a more integrated approach to accommodate wider social and economic objectives including leadership development at the local level at present (NPC, 2017). Addition to this, the role of CF in poverty alleviation, legal advocacy, capacity building, harnessing social equity, and the institutionalization of democratic governance and norms on a wider scale cannot be undermined (Pandit et al., 2009).

In recent year, the CFUGs have been using their new patented right to attach investment to help grow a variety of forest-based enterprises, community forest enterprise that may include timber processing, tourism activities and small firms that process and market non-timber forest products (Adhikary et al., 2017). CFEs are the vehicle for reducing

unemployment growth and poverty that exist in community (Tieguhong et al., 2012). CFEs provides many employment opportunities to lots of locals directly involve in enterprises and the figures are more dramatic when informal sector is taken into consideration. The estimation suggest that forest based small and medium enterprises account more than 80% of all forest enterprises in developing countries (Mayer, 2006). The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates the contribution of forestry to employment is likely triple than in global statistics.

Besides CFEs based on products they are important providers of ecosystem services and increasingly provide tourism services. The widespread belief is that the significance of the enterprises is directly linked to the local community and the major share of the benefits go to the local people. Such local initiatives or micro enterprises based on community dependent forest is an organized activity for strengthening their economic conditions, better networking of their stakeholder and creating employment opportunities through value addition (Macqueen, 2008b). Analyzing people perception towards the forest products supply and local environment conditions, it is found that the environmental conditions at the local level improved on increased forest products supply from the forest (Pandit and Bevilacqua, 2011).

This suggest people would actively participate in forest conservation and protection if they benefitted directly or indirectly from the forest in significant amount. The locally available and commercially valuable natural resources, including MAPs, have the potential to improve the livelihoods of rural mountain people (Rasul et al., 2012). CFEs are categorized under agriculture and forestry enterprises (AFEs) by department of Industry (DoI) of the GoN. In 2017, Department of Cottage and small industries (DCSI) indicated 22% AFEs are established out of 2,09,275 cottage and small industries (CSIs) by the fiscal year (FY) 2014/15. Further categorization of these AFEs indicates large portion were furniture enterprises (69%) followed by NWFP – SSFEs (17%), saw mills (13%) and plywood and veneer producers less than one percent (Paudel, 2018).

Various small-scale forest-based micro enterprises, cottage industries and co-operative have made significant contribution to the generation of employment and income at local level, as well as enhancing the national economy by promoting the export of enterprise-based forest products (MoF, 2016). The Enterprise Policy 2010 and Annex 9 of the Industrial Enterprise Act 2017 recognize AFEs as a nationally prioritized enterprise. Based on this recognition such enterprises will have sufficient opportunities to utilize incentives and tax exemptions for their development. (Paudel et al., 2018). There are various provisions to create a conducive environment for the establishment and operation of CFEs, along with that there exist some gaps and issues that need to be addressed in order to promote CFEs in the future in existing policy and legal framework (Paudel et al., 2018). Weak harmonization between legal framework covering CFEs and inconsistent government policies and practices creates various issues and problems like irregular supply of raw materials and market access (Rai et al., 2016).

In case of NWFP-based CFEs resources both raw materials and capital inputs are not adequate to ensure sustainability and economies of scale rather opportunities to pool the resources are affected by institutional and geographical factors (Koirala et al., 2013). Thus, many CFEs reportedly face problems within a few years of establishment, eventually leading to their closure (Rai et al., 2016). All the CFEs are not registered with Nepal's Department of Industry (DoI) as there are number of uncertainties surrounding their establishment and existence and thus creates differences in the estimated number of CFEs operated in Nepal (Subedi et al., 2014). Many CFEs remain unregistered but continue to operate due to their small size but exhaustive, time-consuming and tedious administrative process for registration that often discourage enterprises from registration with the DoI system as a result a number of CFEs are operated by CFUGs without registration (Paudel et al., 2018). To understand the sustainability of established enterprises benefit-cost analysis provide information to the decision-makers, the official who will appraise and evaluate the project whether to continuerunning the enterprises or needs some improvement (Campbell and Brown, 2003).

2. METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study Area

The research was conducted in three community forest enterprises of Kaski, Parbat and Tanahun districts of Gandaki Province representing mid-hills region of Western Nepal. Kaski lies in between Parbat in South West and Tanahun in South East. The only CF enterprise operated by

Banpalae Community Forest was chosen from Kaski and Mountain Tanahun Community Bel and Fruit Processing Industry CFE from Tanahun district while PargatisilAllo Enterprises from Parbat were chosen. The enterprises are from subtropical climatic zone in the range between 1000 m to 2000 m. The enterprises from these districts are chosen as they represent more or less, the socioeconomic and biophysical conditions of mid-hills of the western Nepal.

Lapsi enterprise operated by community forest user group which lies in Annapurna – 3, DhikurPokhariKaski, Allo enterprise operated in the name of Pragatisilallo enterprise which lies in Modi – 4, KyangLesbar, Parbat, and Bel enterprise in the name of Mountain Tanahun Community Bel and Fruit Processing Industry which lies in Myagde – 2, Jamunae, Tanahun are the enterprise under this study.

The CFEs are chosen in the way that meet the intended objectives in consultation with Division Forest Office and other stakeholders. The criteria for the selection of CFEs are:

- CFUGs operating CFEs and have similar socioeconomic and biophysical characters.
- CEF with different products from each district.

2.2 Research Design

The research study has adapted descriptive research design. The descriptive research design was used to understand the existing situation and different aspects of CFEs and barriers CFEs has faced, including the possible ways to improve its condition to benefits more people.

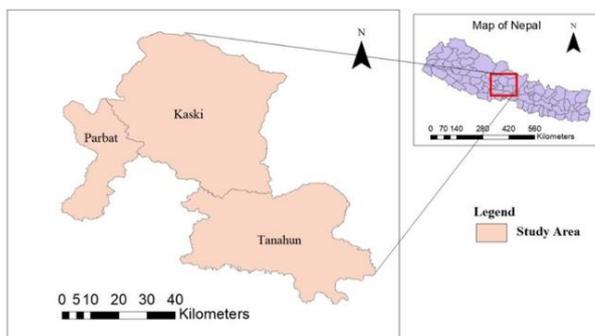


Figure 2: Map of Study Area

2.3 Data Collection Method

The nature of this research is qualitative and descriptive. Both the primary and secondary methods of data collections were used. These methods are described below.

2.3.1 Primary Data Collection

Primary Data was collected based on specific objective that need to be fulfilled. The methods used for data collection are shown below:

2.3.1.1 Key Informant Interview (KII)

Key informants of the study were those directly and indirectly related to community forest enterprise. Interview schedule was prepared based on the objectives of the research study containing both closed as well as open-ended questions. Both structured and unstructured interviews including both individual and group interviews were conducted. Key informants included the local village leaders in the area, operators of the enterprise, executive members of forest user group. Other supporting agencies such as Government agencies were also included.

2.3.1.2 Focal Group Discussion (FGD)

Focus group discussion was done with operators in DhikurPokhari and Lesbar who were mainly the primary operators. Next focus group discussion was done in Jamunae where another group of operators and processors were located. The focal group discussion consisted of 7-10 members and the discussion was guided by the use of checklist, each discussion lasted for over 2 hours. The focus group discussion provided an opportunity to collect information related to status and barriers faced by the enterprise and identify measures for the effective functioning of enterprise. This discussion also facilitated to triangulate and cross checking of data taken from semi structured interview.

2.3.1.3 Direct Field Observation

The field observation of various primary and secondary processing and marketing technique of the enterprise was made. This helped in understanding the nature of the work in the enterprise. It also provided a basis to cross-check the data generated from the interview and FGDs.

2.3.1.4 Cash-flow Analysis

Major data required to know the actual status based on its cost and revenue, information related to all direct cost that may be establishment cost, running cost, administrative cost and major revenue collected from enterprise product sell on annual basis of at least of last 4 years was collected depending upon its availability. This would help to give differences in cost invest and revenue generated from each year. The higher the differences, the more profitable would be the enterprise taking revenue generated is higher.

2.3.1.5 Policy & Institution Review

Based on the second objective, policy and institutional mechanism and provisions was reviewed to understand the policy and institutional level barriers. Analyzing the policies related to enterprise and forest, will give clear ideas on the barriers that hinders establishment and functioning of the enterprise, while, analyzing different role play by the different stakeholders in an institution give ideas related to institutional barriers on CF enterprises.

2.3.1.6 Listing Preference analysis

As per the third objective of this research study to identify the possible actions, it is required to prepare list of preferred institutional mechanism from key informants' interview, focus groups discussion, stakeholders' consultations. The list of preferred institutional mechanism would be recommended for better functioning of CF enterprises.

2.3.2 Secondary Data Collection

The secondary data was collected from relevant published reports and documents like Forest Act, Regulation, policy documents or literature, journal. The Constitution, Operation Plan, minute books, record books of CFUG and others institutions like service provider and I/NGO close to CF would provide relevant information about the CF. The information that won't available in field during field visit in short duration of time was received from secondary data source it out. Secondary data helped to make understand various pattern and trends of changes analyzing data from different time frame. The secondary data was collected from journal, literatures, articles, internet and other published and unpublished materials and campus library.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings section mainly discusses on the financial status of the enterprises based on the income and expenses done by them in recent years, barriers and constraints due to existing policies and institutional makeup of the organization also including initiative that needed to be taken for the effective functioning of the enterprises as recommendation obtain from survey.

3.1 Financial status of the enterprises

The economy of the enterprises those under study are more or less directly depended on donation and technical support by external agencies, addition to shares and saving collected from members, membership fees, return from enterprise products. The high revenue over cost would be more meaningful as they serve and benefit for whom they are established. All the three enterprise were legally registered in District Cottage and Small Industry Office (DCSIO) and can perform any financial transactions. Each CFEs had accumulated a substantial amount of fund through donations, membership fees.

3.1.1 Financial Status of NamunaBanpale Community Forest

Namuna Banpale Community Forest was handed over in 6th of Jestha, 2050 B.S. with an area of 16 ha. which lies in Laxmi Deurali of Annapurna Rural Municipality ward no.3. The community forest includes 159 households. The major occupation was Agriculture and they were Hindus. The community forest launches its Lapsi enterprise in the year 2071 B.S. utilizing Lapsi available in forest. All members of community forest user group are involved in Lapsi enterprise. The income and expenses made on behalf of community forest and enterprise were kept in single record. The enterprise products are *aachar*, *mada* and *candy* from Lapsi. Thus, the year

wise income and expenses generated based on different category by the community forest is discussed below.

Income/Exp. FY	Income		Expense	
	Internal	External	Direct	Indirect
2071/072	91,591	92,240	48,034	55,960
2072/073	60,789.7	255,850	59,628	58,000
2073/074	142,923	55,550	76,368	62,108
2074/074	239,728.48	735,399	227,590	182,210

In the Fiscal Year 2071/072, the enterprise was in the establishment phase thus they required high amount of capital for the development of the enterprise. The enterprise was able to contribute very little from its own contribution. The enterprise was not self-financing for the development of enterprise thus they expected high capital investment from the external assistance. However, the enterprise collected 49.82 % of total income from internal source while remaining 50.18 % from external supporting agencies like DFO, Kaski and FECOFUN. In the following years, the revenue collection from internal source in each year was found higher than previous year except in the year 2072/073. The reason behind it was due to less production of the raw material that year. The main internal sources of revenue were amount obtained from selling enterprise products, and membership charges.

The revenue collected from the external sources also found to be increasing each year except in the year 2073/074. Usually, the external funding was mobilized for upliftment of the enterprise. The activities like purchase of machinery & processing equipment, conducting regular forest program, establishment of poverty alleviation fund were performed from the supports. DFO provided funds for regular forest program and *Hariyo Ban* Program supported for the establishment of poverty alleviation fund in the year 2072/073 and 2074/074. Also, the revenue the enterprise collected from external sources was found higher than the revenue collected from the internal sources in every year except in the FY 2073/074. From the table, it is seen that the enterprise was more dependent on external support rather than funding own-self. The enterprise was in the establishment phase and thus found needs more support. When the enterprise established well then, their income from internal sources increases thus, they had to rely less with the donor agencies.

In the table, the expenses made by the enterprise in last four years is shown. It is clear that, the direct expenses in the enterprise was increasing each year. The investment made in the year 2074/075 was significantly higher i.e. it was more than sum total of previous three years. The direct expenses were made mainly on purchasing processing materials, raw materials, and wages for labor. The indirect expenses other than investment were mainly on employing forest watchman to look after forest, conducting forest regulating programs, supporting in social works and carry out auditing managerial works. In first three years, the indirect expenses made by CF was almost equal while expense made on fourth year was significantly higher.

Income/Expense Fiscal Year	Income Earn from Enterprise product	Direct Expense made on Enterprise
2071/072	40,425	48,034
2072/073	29,100	59,628
2073/074	135,225	76,368
2074/075	174,615	227,590

From the records, it is clear that the income earned alone from selling of enterprise product was less than the expenses made for the production of enterprise products. In the fiscal year 2073/074 the enterprise was receiving more benefits from selling its enterprise products then direct expenses made on that year. But in other fiscal years the condition was the expenses made was higher than earning made from selling of enterprise product. The enterprise wouldn't sustain on its own if not supported by other donor agencies and other income used for the operation of the enterprise. The graphical representation of the amount that directly expensed and income made from the enterprise product in each fiscal year is shown in the graph below.

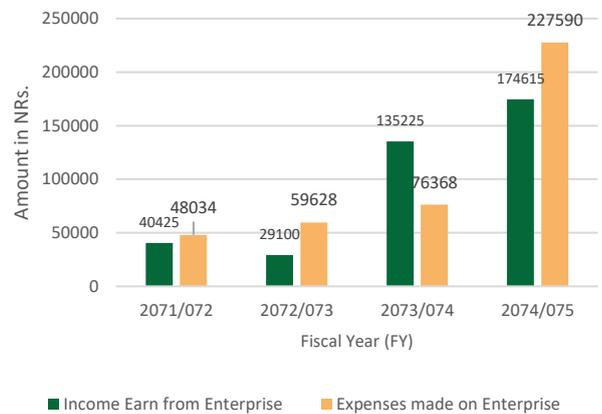


Figure 3: Expensed and income made from the enterprise product in each fiscal year

3.1.2 Financial status Mountain Tanahun Community Bel and fruit Processing Enterprises

This enterprise was established in 2071 B.S. in Jamunae of Myagde Rural Municipality ward no. 2. This enterprise is established with collaboration between six community forests of Tanahun. The community forest involved in Bel enterprise are Siddhabatashan CF, Umachowk CF, JyanTyang CF, Bhirpani CF, Barchayang CF and Poseli Community Forest. Other donor agencies are USAID, Hariyo Ban, Care Nepal, FECOFUN, NTNC, GONESA, government offices, local government who help either way economically and technically. The enterprise is highly depending on Bel fruit. The availability of bel is in the area of 117 ha. spreading all around six community forest. Eight Bel trees are available in an average in a hectare. And the raw material production from each hectare is 212 Kg. Myagde Rural Municipality Ward No. 2 Office provide approximately 2 Ropani (1000 m²) of land for establishment of enterprise office.

Supporting Agencies	Supported Amount	Remarks
Share Holders	8,60,000/-	Siddhabatashan CF – 2,35,000/-, Bhirpani CF – 2,25,000/-, Poseli CF – 1,25,000/-, Barchayang CF – 75,000/-, JyangtyangPadhera CF – 75,000/-
Care Nepal, Hariyo Ban Program	30,15,113/-	NRs. 11,76,616 – Building and Compound Construction NRs. 17,46,997 – Equipment and Materials NRs. 91,500 – Capacity Building and Market Promotion)
Cottage and Small-Scale Industry Development Committee, Tanahun	95,000/-	Equipment Support
Mountain Tanahun Community Bel and Fruit Processing Industry	8,98,390/-	Building and Compound Construction, Equipments, Materials and Marketing.
Myagde Rural Municipality Ward No. 2 Office		Approx. 2 Ropani Land
Total	48,68,503/-	

Source: Mountain Tanahun Community Bel and Fruit Processing Industry, Information Board

This clearly shows that the establishment of enterprise specially developing enterprise infrastructure by community forests (shareholders) alone was challenging without strong support from donor agencies like Care Nepal and Hariyo Ban Program. The operation of the CFE begins with

collection of raw materials for the enterprise. The raw materials the Bel fruit of Bel tree is collected from April to June in Spring season. The raw materials were collected from every six-community forest associated with this organization including fruits extracted by other groups and individuals in some extent. Large sum of financial investment was made during the establishment of the enterprise that is first and second year of operation of enterprises. The initial investment by each community forest and donor agencies are shown in the table presented above. Other financial records were kept since fiscal year 2072/073 however, it had been missing during research time interval. The enterprise was operated around the end of 2071/072 B.S. but no special records found. However, the status of produced and sold goods with rates and income earn in each fiscal year since establishment are show in a table.

Fiscal Year	Produced Quantity (Bottle)	Sold Quantity (Bottle)	Rate per bottle	Income Amount
2071/072	1,100	900	80/-	72,000/-
2072/073	2,550	2,000	100/-	2,00,000/-
2073/074	2,550	2,100	100/-	2,10,000/-
2074/075	2,550	2,350	150/-	3,52,500/-
Total	8,750	7,350	113.54 (Avg.)	8,34,500/-

Source: Mountain Tanahun Community Bel and Fruit Processing Industry, Information Board

Graphical representation of status of production & sold of enterprise products, rate per each item and total income earn is shown in the figure 4 (below).

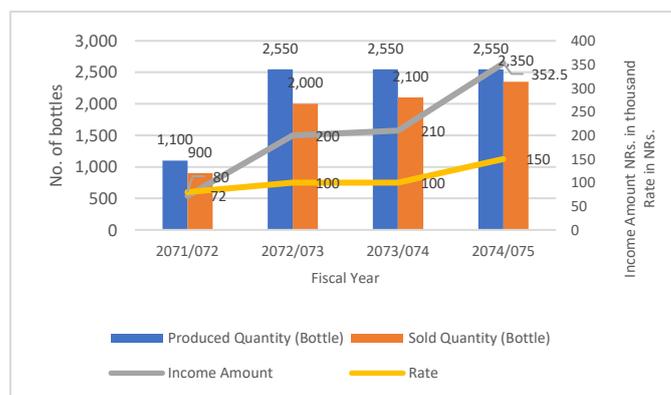


Figure 4: Graph representing amount of product produced, sold, rate per quantity, income earn in each fiscal year.

Table 4 clearly shows the amount invested by different agencies along with the amount invested by shareholders community forests for the establishment of the enterprise. From the available records of the fiscal years 2073/074 and 2074/075 it shows that the enterprise was supported by shareholders community forests and donor agencies by supporting large sum of grant for establishment and operations of enterprise. The revenue collected from the internal source i.e. by enterprise itself, revenue collected from external source, direct expenses made on enterprise and others indirect expenses made by enterprise are explain in table below.

Income/Exp. FY	Income		Expenses	
	Internal	External	Direct	Indirect
2073/074	46,120	209,147.9	59,645	817,807.4
2074/075	5,16,440	13,81,690.93	778,956.8	764,137.11

From the last two years of records, it clearly shows that the income of the enterprise was increasing observing internal income earn by the enterprises in two fiscal year. The income collected in FY 2074/075 includes income from the enterprise product sold in previous years as well. The external source of income for the support of the enterprise was also found increasing in last FY 2074/075 due to large amount received as a grant from donor agency in comparison with income obtained from the previous year. Records also clearly shows the increased amount of expenses in enterprises as an investment was significantly higher in FY

2074/075 than the investment made in FY 2073/074. This was higher because the enterprise invests large sum of amount in various processing machinery, in the production cost and in marketing the enterprise products. The other expenses other than investment were indirect expenses that didn't directly increase enterprise production capacity but helped to build up essential infrastructure required for properly managing production procedure and protection of raw materials. The indirect expenses on the enterprise mainly was directly associated with constructing a building, constructing compound, repairing building in some extent the indirect expense includes expenses made on furniture, and other managerial cost.

3.1.3 Financial Status of PragatisilAllo Enterprise

PragatisilAllo Enterprise was established informally 15 years ago using traditional weaving techniques with the support of Resapat community forest and Khar Subash community forest. The *allo* raw materials were not available on those community forest thus, members involving in the enterprise had to bring raw materials from distance community forests ThulaTauka community forest and Gairakharka community forest. Later, this enterprise formally was registered in Cottage and Small industry, Parbat. The supporting agencies like NESDO Nepal, DFO Parbat, local government, cottage and small industry helped to build a community hall. The community hall was used for extending and managing the *allo* enterprise through arranging an environment for weaving *allo* threads for the community women. The community hall was built in school periphery thus the enterprise didn't have land tenure right. The building was of two floor building. The halls had nine and ten traditional weaving machines called '*Taan*' in each floor. But all the '*Taan*' were not in state of functioning due to insufficient space available when they were in functional state. Only seven and eight from each floor, altogether fifteen '*Taan*' were found functioning in the time of research. The enterprise especially focused on training women of the village to involve in weaving *allo* thread. The '*Taan*' for weaving had been supported by different organization. The main support was especially obtained from DFO Parbat in preparing the weaving tools.

Donor Agencies	Amount
District Development Committee	176,000/-
Village Development Committee	51,000/-
Legislative Development Fund	20,000/-
Small Enterprise Development Program	50,000/- + 50,000/-
LGCDP	5,60,000/-
District Forest Program, Parbat	60,000/-
Total	9,67,000/-

Source: Banner in community hall of Pargatisil Allo Enterprise.

During the course of study, there were all together 15 weaving machines. Whereas, the participants from the local community interested in *allo* cloth weaving was found higher than the enterprise capacity. Additional ten more local community women were interested to make their participate in the enterprise. However, due to lack of space they could not operate available weaving tools. All these participants had to involve turn by turn. When a participant completed her weaving work then another participant took next chance. In the enterprise, one participant completed weaving *allo* cloth from minimum length 2 m to maximum length 7 m in a single day depending on their skills, effectiveness, training, and activeness in weaving *allo* cloth. In an average, 3 – 4 m length of *allo* cloth can be weaved by single participant in a day.

So, total length of *allo* cloth produced in a single active day from 15 *taans* of the enterprise is 52.5 m taking an average 3.5 m in between 3 m and 4 m. The market price of 1-meter *allo* cloth was NRs. 450/-. The price was even higher as the demand of *allo* products was higher in past years but the price was found reduced even upto NRs. 400/- due to high competition and low demand due to other substituting products. When the enterprise able to operate 20 days in a month and the market price of *allo* cloth per meter remain NRs. 450 then the total revenue earn by the enterprises was amount NRs. 4,72,500/-. When this revenue was distributed among 25 participants, earning of a single participant of the enterprise in an entire month was in an average of NRs, 17,000 to NRs. 18,000. The enterprise hardly runs 6 – 8 months based on the availability of the raw materials. Thus, the earning made by a single participant from the enterprise was about NRs. 120,000 in an annual basis. The table# below shows the status or production and income earn from the enterprise.

Table 7: Status of allo production and income earn.

No. of weaving machine	Average length of weaved <i>Allo</i> per machine per person	Average Price (Rs) per m	Working days in a month	Total Revenue
15	3.5 m	450	20	4,72,500/-

Source: Field Visit 2019.

The members involving in the enterprise were not making this much amount revenue in recent years due to unavailability of market and reduced amount of demand.

Table 8: Cost expended in the enterprise for the production

Length of Weaved <i>Allo</i> cloth	Harvesting cost (100 per m)	Wages cost (200 per m)	Other Cost (50 per m)	Total Cost (350 per m)
1,050 m	1,05,000/-	2,10,000/-	52,500/-	3,67,500/-

Discussing the cost expended in the enterprise for the production was found increasing in recent years. While preparing 1 m of allo cloth it cost not less NRs. 100/- in harvesting its raw materials, the wages for the production of that piece cost not less than NRs. 200/- and other various cost such as maintenance cost, transportation cost and others include not less than NRs. 50/-. Thus, in total in preparing a meter of allo cloth cost NRs. 350/- and thus, when they didn't good market price it was difficult to make their living from the enterprise earning alone. When the entrepreneurs able to maintain margin of profit to NRs. 100/- makes them earning of almost NRs. 6,000/- while the wages obtained by the entrepreneurs themselves that added NRs. 18,000/- in each month

in maximum. In total, they may benefit with 24,000/- when the product gets sold and received minimum profit margin of NRs. 100 in each meter. Due to seasonal availability of raw materials the engagement of people in the enterprise wouldn't last all around the year. The raw materials would be extracted in the suitable time during its maturity. The raw materials of *Allo* is matured to harvest during August and September. The enterprise products add income to the enterprises after the products were sold in market but startup cost was found higher than that of income it generated. The people involved in enterprises were mostly poor and a substantial proportion over better-off and wealthy households during harvesting and processing of enterprise product. The enterprise added an opportunity to involve in income generating activities in their free time. However, the contribution of enterprise product varies depending upon the market demand. Based on study, *Allo* enterprise was found not making good income in recent years. But the support in people livelihood adds something better than having nothing.

3.2 Barriers in Community Forest Enterprises

Community forests have its own type of barriers, problems and obstacles based on its geographical location, topography, terrain, distance of the market, availability of raw materials, seasons to harvest, harvesting technology, distance to transport the raw materials to the processing center. There may sometimes appears various barriers when carrying out any types of business or the enterprise. Operating an enterprise in coordination with every member of the community is not the easy task. In addition to that the nature of the raw materials it's method to harvest and extract raw materials adds up challenges specially when there is no suitable and scientific technology is used. Low availability of raw materials, far distance, and difficult to harvest are the initials barriers during enterprise operations.

Table 9: Generals barriers during operation of CFEs.

S.No.	Enterprise	Raw materials distance	Harvesting easiness	Transportation of raw materials	Processing	Market Distance	Difficulty in terrain	Labor cost
1	Pragatisil <i>Allo</i> Enterprise	Far	Easy	Difficult	Difficult	Far	High	Normal
2	Namuna Banpale CF (<i>Lapsi</i> Enterpris)	Near	Difficult	Easy	Normal	Near	Medium	Normal
3	Mountain Tanahun Community Bel and Fruit Processing Industry (Bel Enterpris)	Far	Difficult	Difficult	Difficult	Near	High	High

The ranking of barriers faced by the community forest enterprises are listed below based on the study.

Market Availability: This barrier was mainly faced by *allo* enterprises. The market was at far distance and also the demand of the local *allo* product was low. *Lapsi* enterprise was also facing similar problem of low demand of its product in the market.

Transportation: For marketing the enterprise product *allo* enterprise was having problem because of improper road and high transportation cost. *Bel* enterprise had to collect raw materials from far distance in difficult terrain which resulted high transportation cost.

Harvesting technique: Study shows that still traditional harvesting techniques were practiced in all three CFEs. These enterprises could not effort modern techniques in harvesting due to its high cost.

Availability of raw materials: Limited quantity of raw material production was observed in each enterprise. The seasonal availability of raw materials reduced the production capacity of the enterprises.

Energy/Electricity: Processing of raw material for the production of the enterprise product required high amount of energy. The cost of the energy was high. There was no any support in energy cost for community enterprises. High fuel cost causes trouble in transporting raw materials and final product. Also, high-cost fuels required in processing like firewood, electricity in *lapsi* and *bel* enterprise increased expenses on the enterprise.

Support from concern authority: The concern authority had made various support which were not sufficient enough. The supporting agencies were not able to create suitable marketing environment. And they could not provide required managerial training to the entrepreneurs.

High tax Impose: Despite of sufficient enterprise environment the government was imposing tax in community forest enterprise. Since the CFEs were established with the theme of uplifting local livelihood but the taxation one enterprise products take their profit away from them.

Availability of Labor: The availability of cheap labor was low. Thus, to hire the labor for enterprise work the cost reached high. This increases the production cost thus decreases the profit margin. Especially, the labor to harvest raw materials was high. The tall tree of *Bel* and *lapsi* creates difficulty in harvest and thus only few interested in high wages.

3.2.1 Policy Barriers in Community Forest Enterprises

Reviewing the policy related to the community forest enterprise it was found that the environment for CFEs is very favorable. The policies help to promote CFEs but it's implementation into practice has problem. Thus, there are several issues within policy and regulatory that hinders the growth of CFEs in Nepal. The study has identified some of those policy barriers as shown in table below (Table 10)

Table 10: Some policy barriers faced by CFEs and its affect in implications		
Community Forest Enterprise	Policy Barriers	Problems in Implication of CFEs
Pargatisilallo Enterprise	Cumbersome process of registration of community forest enterprise	Users don't have sufficient time to spent in headquarters following multi steps and criteria.
	Centralized and lengthy export process	Export is beyond the capacity of local CFEs
	Insufficient financial incentives to community forest enterprise.	No promotion of local enterprise.
	Imposing private company rules to CFEs	Contradicts with the principles of CF management and limits the opportunity of local people.
	Fluctuating rates of CFEs products and raw materials.	Enlarged costs for per unit production
	Undermining small-scale enterprise.	Favoring big business but not small-scale enterprises managed by rural communities.
	Assuming collective enterprise	Production by individual or at household scale not communal.
Mountain Tanahun Bel and Fruit Processing Industry	Insufficient financial support.	Loan with low interest rate not available.
	Maintaining food quality of enterprise products	Not availability of food quality measuring facility nearby.
	Imposing private company rules to CFEs	Treating as profit oriented private company.
	Imposing high tax.	No any provision to reduce tax to community-based forest enterprise.
NamunaBanpale CF (Lapsi) enterprise	Focusing on specialization	Local practice highly diverse and integrated systems.
	Inadequate financial incentives to community-based forest enterprises.	Business opportunity goes unexploited at local level.

Despite various promises of the government and support agencies, there are several policy and legal challenges for the establishment of CFEs (FAO, 2009). Dilution, distortion and ineffective enforcement of original spirit of policies, power imbalance and conflicts between implementing authorities and various professional and disciplinary orientations of key regulatory institutions such as different line ministries and their functional units also bring confusion and contraction in establishing and promoting forest-based enterprises in Nepal (Ojha, et al., 2008).

Community Forest was handed over to forest user groups based on CBFM programs and thus, the enterprises in which they were engaged are strongly influenced by the condition and support provided by those programs of the community forests. Large forest area of CF was allocated for Enterprise's operation. However, CFUGs land are not allocated to individual households but rather as a common property resource for all CFUG members. Sometimes the common ownership is often reported to

be a constraint to enterprise development because not all the member is equally capable to take similar incentives in the common forest, knowing that the gains will be distributed approximately uniformly among the members.

On the other hand, policy of common ownership has its rationale and the challenge for CFUGs is to encourage investment in and enterprise activities from the forest resources. One effective practice by CFUGs involve in enterprise is allocation of a parcel of the total CFUG land for the production of selected forest products for commercial purposes. Of the three CFEs selected, *Allo* enterprise receives raw materials from forest land allocated for *Allo*, *Lapsi* enterprise have allocated forest land for *Lapsi*, and *Bel* enterprise have allocated forest land for *Bel* in six different CF.

CF has many members, not all of them can be directly involved in enterprise. The operation of the enterprises in a group is difficult as every individual can't give full attention and responsibility in operating of the enterprise. This difficulty is somehow addressed by providing saving and loan services to the CF users from the support of the external donor agency. Member who are interested in individual enterprise obtain loan service in low interest rate that have encouraged them to involve in enterprise. Diverse investment reduces the risk not only in Forest User groups but also for individuals. Group enterprises within FUGs are still underdeveloped, and operated in limited scale. Formation of large organization is essential. So, developing networks, cooperatives and companies help in minimizing constraints due to limited scale.

3.2.2 Institutional Barriers in Community Forest Enterprises

Table 11: Some Institutional Barriers in Community Forest Enterprises		
Community Forest Enterprise	Institutional Barriers	Problems in Implication of CFEs
Pargatisilallo enterprise	Inadequate enforcement of existing policies	CFEs could not enjoy available services and facilities.
	No use of scientific technique	Long time to harvest and processing of raw material.
	Few training to entrepreneurs	Low business skills.
Mountain Tanahun Bel and Fruit Processing Industry	Unable to utilize common fund.	Don't have any mechanism to invest available resources of CF.
	Lack of sufficient coordination.	Mainly operator got more responsibility than others.
	Inefficient incentives	Problem in extension of enterprise.
NamunaBanpale CF (Lapsi) enterprise	Some are not interested in enterprise	Give little attentions on enterprise activities and attend few enterprise activities.
	Undeveloped market for local products.	Less benefits from local markets.

Community Forest Enterprises are formed for the purpose of promoting their common interest, through the promotion of common enterprises. The benefits obtained from the enterprise is supposed to be shared among all the members equally in the case of enterprises operated by community forest users. For obtaining the equal share in the benefit portion they need to contribute equal shares of capital. All the members may not afford thus the sum total capital is less than the actual capacity they are capable to invest. Forest based enterprise in CF have high capital investment but they process few high-value products like *Allo* garment, *Lapsia*achar and *Bel* juice from respective CFEs under study.

Transparency: Only few executive members involving in operations were found well known about enterprise activities. Most of them were found unknown about what they are going to do next. Not well information sharing among members decreases interest over enterprises. The executive member should make clear about what they are doing next to the users. Involving users participation in decision making was found essential for functioning of enterprise in coordination among them.

Accountability: The executive members need to be accountable with the users group from whom they receive the responsibility. When a responsible person didn't perform his/her work as assigned then that reduces enterprise capacity to make progress in desired goal. The enterprise would do better when each member accountable with the group.

Participation: Users participation in enterprise activities was found more voluntary in nature also labor intensive. Less returned compare to their involvement reduces motivation. Also, no any priority to users in decision making demotivate.

Enterprise management: High managerial cost in record keeping and huge transactions cost causes high production cost in small enterprise.

Knowledge and training: People with less managerial skill of enterprise caused trouble in management of the enterprise.

3.3 Actions for the effective functioning

Table 12: Recommended action for effective functioning		
Community Forest Enterprise	Actions	Improvement in CFEs.
Pargatisilallo enterprise	Should be operated in annual basis.	Enterprises dependent community would be benefit.
	Secure market for local product	Easy access to the local product in market.
	Incentives for expansion of enterprise.	Increase production of the enterprise.
	Conducting training for skill development.	Help to increase business and managerial skills.
	Use of advanced technology.	Replacing traditional weaving machine help increase production.
Mountain Tanahun Bel and Fruit Processing Industry	Advancement in harvesting technique	Easy extraction of raw materials.
	Arrangement of reliable transportation means.	Reduce transportation cost and easy transportation.
	Arranging cheap and reliable fuel or energy source.	Reduces the production cost of the enterprise product.
	Providing food quality measuring service locally.	Food sampling for quality test would be easy.
	Accessible of low interest rate loan.	Help to increase investment.
NamunaBanpale CF (Lapsi) enterprise	Skilled manpower for harvesting raw materials.	For easy harvesting of fruits from tall lapsitree.
	Providing training for bussiness skill.	Help to operate enterprise smoothly
	Ensure market for local product.	Local products can easily consume.
	Promotion of quality local products.	Increased in local product demand help to sustain enterprise.
	Add enterprise product.	Increase source of income for poor community.

CFEs is one of the meaningful pathways for the alleviation of poverty of forest-dependent communities utilizing forest products from the community forest, local creativity and entrepreneurship through the activities of community people. Forest resources have the potential to create economic opportunities in local level and to strengthen the resource conservation. The policy and attention are given to focus this activity utilizing forest products from the community forest. Many reformations have been made in last few decades but still there are lots of

to reform for betterment of the users involving in the enterprises in the community forest.

Many new problems are arising with the change of market structure and demand and development of the advanced technology. To overcome the competition faced by the enterprises with the development of advanced technology user also need to familiar to catch up the trend and need to reduce production cost to compete with other reveal products in the market. Thus, from the study of three CFEs, it was found that some changes are need to made based on the barrier each of the enterprise is facing. Each enterprise has its own constraints and limitations that may due to geography, remoteness, traditional technology, locally inappropriate managerial procedure, and many more.

3.3.1 Functional on Annual Basis

The studied enterprises all were found to be operated seasonally that means they can't run throughout the year. So, the dependent community can't fully dependent on these enterprises. Thus, people get less interested in involving in the enterprises in this sense. All the member involves have their own household works and they have to do all and look after their other economical sources to make their living. So, first of all the enterprise should be made that operate whole year. For that support should be provided by the authorized agency to collect raw materials required for whole year or add up other diverse type of enterprise product to reduce dependency on single raw materials available in single season. This help to inspire locals and involve with full comfort. Among these enterprises, users found in *allo* enterprise keep them involved in *allo* thread weaving comparatively more time compare to other, in *Lapsi* enterprise they involve during available of *lapsi* that hardly last for four months and that only some days while in *bel* enterprise user involve during harvesting, processing, filling and packing of the final product.

3.3.2 Facilities of market for local products

Availability of the market should be ensured by any means. Encouraging locals and poor community in forest-based enterprises but not ensuring the market for the local production was the challenges faced by CFEs. No any clear provision to buy qualitative enterprise products from the enterprises discourage enterprises to produce products in large quantity. Although there is market for these products, they are not well managed. The competition between similar products, distribution mechanisms of the products and lack of knowledge to the consumers about the quality products creating troubles for local products. So, all the works from taking responsibility to buy quality enterprise product and promote and distribution responsibility should be done by an authorized agency so that it really contributes to the poor who involve in the enterprises after selling out their goods to market. The policies that encourage the use of local products, promotion, make aware the benefits of the goods, distribution and knowledge to identify the original good should be provided and take responsibility.

3.3.3 Incentive for the establishment of forest-based enterprises in CF.

Incentive to the user involving in the enterprises is required most to increase people participation of people in the enterprises activities that helped to uplift their socio-economic condition. Since, forest-based enterprise in community forest is targeted to socially and economically backwards poor communities thus, to bring up them government should provide some sorts of incentives in establishment of the enterprise so that they can make their living from the enterprises. During the establishment phase it require large sum of investment for the economically weak communities. Government officials should take their initiative for establishing enterprise in the backward communities to overcome their troubles through providing them sustainable source for making their living.

3.3.4 Training and educate users in managerial and enterprise processing technique

General population in rural area are unaware of managerial and other various techniques requires to operate the enterprises. Thus, they need to trained first and give them lots of information and knowledge about the ways how people can take benefits, the responsibility they need to fulfill, contribution they can made to improve enterprise activities in more competitive and effective ways. Necessary guide should be given and experience sharing should be encouraged thus, new members involving in the enterprise would be aware about how to do processing, marketing, recording transactions and supports, coordinating with other agencies etc.

3.3.5 Use of advanced technology

The 21st Century markets are always competitive either that is due to similar products produce or substitutional products available in the market and are available in low price. The product price is low when their production cost is reduced. When the enterprise products are produced in less amount the production cost per each quantity is higher so, increasing no. of enterprise would help to reduce expenses made on each of the enterprise. Traditional methods of harvesting, transporting, processing and packing in each step if advanced technology is used then that would be cheaper in long run for comparatively larger enterprises.

4. CONCLUSION

From the study, it was concluded that among three CFEs, *Bel* Enterprise of Tanahun was functioning well in comparison to other two community forest enterprises. Study revealed that establishment cost of the enterprise is higher and community users alone can't make their own initial investment. The enterprises were found operating well once it has been established. Analyzing their records related to the financial transactions shows that their annual income is increasing in *Bel* and *Lapsi* enterprises or at least maintaining certain income level in *Allo* enterprise. The income from the enterprise was not significantly high but it has helped to reduce economic vulnerability to the poor community.

The enterprises were not found operating satisfactorily due to general barriers like limited availability of raw materials, difficulties in collecting raw materials, not having sound managerial skills and to some extent trouble in transportation and market access especially to the *Allo* enterprise operating in rural area of Parbat. The policy barrier faced by the enterprises found during the study were mainly focused around tedious and time consuming multi steps provision and multi criteria fulfillment for the establishment of the forest-based enterprises in community forest. Along with that, taxation system for CFEs is equivalent to other private enterprises, not any provision for providing incentive to user for the establishment of the enterprises, and no provision in policy to secure market for local production.

The institutional barrier includes, difficulties to participate people in regular meeting, people involving in other activities to earn for their living do not attend meeting with no any direct economic benefits. The interventions that CFEs need to take for the effective functioning of the enterprises are updating policies so that establishment of community forest based enterprises would be easy, provision that support in the establishment of enterprise in CF should maintain, discount price for community forest enterprises in transportation and energy consumption, help in advancement of the technology, add provision in policy for training the users about the managerial and business skills, and encourage users to operate enterprises in annual basis with required support.

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