



Growing Forest Partnerships

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Growing Forest Partnerships is an initiative that helps create and strengthen ways of working together for the benefit of forests and the people that depend on them.

Linking forest communities through radio in Nepal

Communication workshops held in GFP countries have shown that radio is often the best tool to reach local communities in rural areas and ensure communication flow.

The Global Alliance of Community Forestry, in cooperation with the Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN) and community forestry user groups has launched a media programme — using radio and television. They have collected a series of stories from local community forestry users on sustainable forest management and locally controlled forestry and shared them nationally. The stories cover the current policy review in Nepal and climate change governance.

Each story is introduced by a reflection and statement on sustainable forest management.

Voice of Community Forestry has been broadcast by Community Radio Prakriti FM 93.4 MHz and Nepal national television in English and Nepali. The series has also been disseminated through various international websites and meetings.

Below is an excerpt adapted from one of the stories broadcast, describing a success story of community forestry from the Sunsari district in southern Nepal:



Melody Nelson

The G3 voice at UNFF9

THE THREE RIGHTS HOLDERS GROUP, the G3, organised two side events in New York at the UNFF9 held between 24 January and 4 February 2011. Members from IFFA and GACF — building on concrete case studies from Ethiopia, Mexico, Kenya and Vietnam fostered through the collaboration with GFP — demonstrated the importance of locally controlled forestry and underlined the importance of the cooperation between family forestry, community forestry and indigenous peoples within the G3. The side events were very successful and well attended. **More on www.familyforestry.net**

“ In 1998, locals formed Bhawanipur Community Forest User’s Group (CFUG) to manage the local forest in their own way. The forest was handed over to the local community, giving them control over its management and protection. The consumers have simultaneously intensified plantation and protection of the forest. Over 65 hectares of open land has been planted. Moreover, this community forest has become a reliable source of income generation for marginalised consumers. Locals say they have been earning Rs. 70 lakh annually.

“ *Two years ago, we planted asparagus named American Jersyking from which we earned over Rs. 72 lakh last year alone. The community forest has also become a source of employment to locals,*” said Jagannath Chaulagain, Chairperson, Bhawanipur CFUG.

The CFUG has created job opportunities for marginalised groups, dalits, women and indigenous peoples. This initiative has inspired locals to participate in plantation, protection and scientific management of the forest in their own way.

“ *We planted various species of tree including herbs and asparagus. This community forest has envisioned developing this area as a tourist spot. To that effect small ponds and lakes surrounding the forest are repaired and cleaned up,*” says Durga Prasad Poudel, Vice-Chairperson, Bhawanipur CFUG.

Rubber is also important in this community forest. Locals have started to plant rubber with the target of covering a total of 7 hectares by the next year. “ *We have started to plant rubber trees after concluding that rubber plantations are better from the view point of income generation and sustainable management of forests,*” says Prem Gurung, former Chairperson, Bhawanipur CFUG.

Community forestry management has empowered communities by offering various job opportunities. It has also supported locals in installing bio-gas, constructing local infrastructure and managing forests in a sustainable way. ”



Knowledge sharing: the country exchanges

As part of its aim to build capacity and strengthen partnerships at local, national and international levels, GFP supports an exchange programme between countries, linking up those within the GFP network and others facing similar challenges. These exchange visits encourage South-South learning and collaboration, enabling participants to improve individually and collectively. The first two exchange visits took place in 2010 and another one is planned for 2011.

Reflections from Guatemala and Peru



PERU, A COUNTRY WITH OVER HALF ITS territory covered by forests, is currently the scene of important changes in the way national forests are managed: the Ministry for the Environment has just been consolidated, there is a new proposal for forestry policy encouraged by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Treaty of Free Trade with the USA is being enforced, the REDD readiness process is underway and the next stage of the Forestry Investment Programme of the World Bank is launching. These changes require greater participation in decision-making from forest-dependent people.

In Guatemala, GFP has supported the creation and consolidation of the Alianza Nacional de Organizaciones Forestales Comunitarias de Guatemala, which brings together the country's experience in community forest management and gives a voice to community forestry organisations in policymaking and decision-making processes.

In 2010, forestry stakeholders from both these countries — most of them indigenous people or from forest-related communities — had an opportunity to exchange their experiences of forest management during a GFP-funded visit of a group of Peruvians to Petén, Guatemala. So what did the two countries learn from each other?

The Peruvian visitors learnt the advantages of having a management plan, which would enable them to quantify wood stocks — and therefore the income derived from them. It would also help to plan for exploitation of wood in both the short- and midterm, thereby minimising the impact on the environment.

The concept that wood has a price independent of its location was a new

notion for the Peruvians as most of them commercialise wood according to its proximity to the road rather than its quality or any other characteristic.

Both countries concluded that community forest management is an economic activity with proven profitability, provided people have the technical tools and abilities to develop it successfully. It is important that community leaders are not only strong in political matters but also in issues regarding forestry management and the commercialisation of wood.

The experiences of the Alianza, as well as other Guatemalan community associations ACOFOP and FORESCOM, show the importance of joint working — no organisation on its own could expect to achieve the same results and impact as it would working in a team. The capacity building and trust among partners, as well as equitable distribution of profits, are key aspects to success. In the case of the Alianza, the diversity among its members has increased its strength.

The support of GFP was recognised by the participants as a key factor in strengthening their abilities in matters of policy and in identifying lessons from one another.

West African exchange

A SECOND EXCHANGE TRIP TOOK PLACE in Ghana, with visitors from Burkina Faso and Liberia, focusing on sharing ideas and experiences on REDD.

Ghana has finalised its REDD Readiness Preparatory Proposal, received US\$3.6 million from the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and was one of the first countries selected for the World Bank's Forestry Investment Programme (FIP). Burkina Faso has also been selected for FIP funding and it is hoped that Liberia will soon be brought on board. The visit allowed forest stakeholders to find out more about Ghana's approach, to learn from one another and to discuss the future of forest management and finance opportunities in West Africa.

The exchange involved a workshop on REDD readiness, meetings with state and non-state stakeholders and a visit to a REDD pilot site. It provided an opportunity for participants to develop strategies to strengthen their in-country activities and to align their needs with REDD and FIP objectives. It is hoped that the outcomes will feed into the ongoing forest reform process to ensure that benefits accrued from REDD and other forest investments support local forest stakeholders.

Next up: Laos and Nepal

PLANNING IS UNDERWAY FOR ANOTHER exchange, to take place in spring 2011 between Laos and Nepal.

Laos is home to many — mainly informal — forest-based civil society organisations that support forest-dependent people, enabling them to manage natural resources, defend their rights of access to forests and improve their livelihoods through development of forest-based enterprises. The exchange aims to help these groups set up representative local organisations and share the Nepali experiences of participation at regional and national stakeholder platforms, which will be vital

for them to be included in discussions on forest tenure, benefit sharing and climate change payment schemes like the Forest Investment Programme and REDD+.

In Nepal, the GFP team has been encouraging local-level involvement in the development of national policy processes, including the shaping of Nepal's national REDD strategy. The Laotian group's visit will provide an opportunity for mutual learning and experience sharing, as well as brainstorming about issues such as forest land tenure rights and how to ensure that forest user groups get a fair share in future benefits from REDD and other payment mechanisms.



A GFP Guatemala success story



THE TOWN OF SAN FRANCISCO, which has suffered from high rates of unemployment, is considered a model of how socio-economic development can be achieved through municipal forest management. The municipality accessed the benefits of the Guatemalan Programme for Forestry Incentives — PINFOR — to reforest their poorly used communal lands. This led to the creation of the Oficina Forestal Municipal (OFM), which in 1998 started a pilot plan for the reforestation of 10 hectares. This has since been scaled up to 1,100 hectares and 1,300 hectares of forest have been protected, which has enabled the OFM to obtain an investment of 2.5 million quetzales a year from forestry incentives (US\$312,500).

The key to success has been forestry development through the leasing of communal lands, and the facilitation of seedlings and technical assistance at 10 per cent credit on payment of the incentive.

Seeing how positive the process was, five neighbouring communal groups joined in as well as small landowners needing help. By creating job opportunities this investment has improved the social and environmental quality of the region. In addition, the recovery and protection of forest coverage will, as well as producing timber, preserve the natural biodiversity, with potential for the sale of environmental services.

At present, due to the rapid growth of these plantations, some management is urgently needed. In this context OFM-San Francisco sought help from PFN-Guatemala and received funding from GFP to conduct a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the plantations' timber wood. This has enabled OFM to start production, ensuring compatibility with the needs of the local and regional industry and Guatemalan markets.

The current work under the GFP partnership with OFM is crucial to

establish the timber production strategy, and will guide the future use of San Francisco's area plantations

It has been calculated that there are 1,082 hectares of plantation available for management and 282,000 cubic metres of commercial volume that can be harvested in the next 40 years. In the next two years, 523 hectares require urgent management, which could bring 4,436 cubic metres into the market — equivalent to 975,924 board feet of timber, mostly of small diameter. This volume will progressively increase as plantations develop — peaking in the year 2020 at 49,960 cubic metres.

It is believed that with the increased quantities this initiative will offer, it would be possible to start a cottage industry to process sub-products for the manufacturing of planks. This would reduce the costs of sawing round wood to cut wood, and of transport.

Thanks to the partnership with GFP, new opportunities and ideas on how to use the resources are arising and the municipality of San Francisco is proposing to manage a semi-industrial procedure for processing the extracted timber.

PINPEP law approved in Guatemala

ON 17 NOVEMBER 2010 AT THE CONGRESS of the Republic of Guatemala, Decree 51-2010 — or PINPEP law (Forest Incentives for Owners of Small Forest or Agroforest Holdings) — was approved. The Guatemalan National Institute of Forestry was made responsible for ensuring its implementation and the statute was supported by around 92 organisations, representing a range of groups involved in the activity of forest conservation and development.

The participation of the Alianza Nacional de Organizaciones Forestales Comunitarias — one of the community forestry associations that has been strengthened by the GFP initiative — in the planning and negotiation of this statute was particularly significant, showing its strategic importance in policy matters.

PINPEP, as a tool for the financial and technical support of owners of smallholdings, has the following characteristics:

- financial participation of the Guatemalan government;
- participation of community forestry organisations in its technical decision-making body;
- direct economic support for the conservation and protection of forests, forest planting and agroforest systems;
- operation of a community forest development fund that enables reinvestment and new investment using different sources of financing (national and international).
- support of municipal and communal forest management involving over 900 national community organisations;
- encouragement of the participation of women in forestry activities (35 per cent of beneficiaries of the current PINPEP are women);
- creation of a greater number of inter-institutional alliances concerned with community forestry activity;
- the opportunity to manage and protect more than 50,000 hectares of forest land with different modalities: 40 per cent forest protection, 20 per cent planting and 38 per cent agroforestry improvements;
- reinvestment of a minimum of 20 million quetzales a year in technical assistance to forestry communities, with the creation and operation of a fund for the development of community forestry;
- generation of more than 5 million jobs a year in rural areas.

- national scope;



GFP progress in Liberia

GFP is progressing steadily in Liberia: two projects led by GFP partners are tackling crucial issues and contributing to the new national policy reform on chain sawing regulation. Here we look at the activities carried out between September and November 2010 and some of the initial findings and recommendations.

Capacity building for forest stakeholders

IN JULY 2010, FOREST RESOURCE and Environmental Management Consultant of Liberia (FREMCOL) was selected by the GFP Task Force to “develop a capacity building strategic plan for the forestry sector of Liberia and mobilise resources for its implementation”. In September, FREMCOL carried out a review of existing assessments of capacity needs in the forestry sector, and identified the reports of the Forest Development Authority and of the 15 Community Forestry Development Committees as key to the project.

Following this, a workshop was held in Monrovia where 15 participants from public and private sectors, NGOs and academic institutions identified a country-wide pool of forest sector stakeholders

to be consulted over existing capacity requirements. Questionnaires were drawn up and data collection coordinators recruited to help carry out interviews and fill in questionnaires.

Over a period of nine days the information was collected throughout the 15 counties with a total of 410 questionnaires being sent out. Of these, 274 were completed — 20 per cent of participants were women, 24 per cent had post-high school education, and 15 per cent had little knowledge of the forestry regulatory framework. The raw data was analysed to provide baseline information for the continuation of this project.

The activities so far have identified large capacity gaps or barriers

among forest sector stakeholders. Recommended next steps to be carried out in 2011 include:

- Carry out consultative workshops at national and regional levels to input into the development of a strategic plan to address these capacity needs.
- Present this draft strategic plan to the National Forest Programme and the Multi-stakeholders’ Steering Committee for input and comments.
- Hold a donor conference to solicit funding for the implementation of the plan.
- Present results to the Management of the Forestry Development Authority.

Chainsaw logging regulations needed

A PROJECT LED BY THE RURAL Integrated Center for Community Empowerment (RICCE) is working towards the GFP objective of ensuring that chain sawing in Liberia is properly regulated and controlled, in alignment with sustainability and legality principles.

RICCE brought the Liberia Media Initiative (LMI) and the Friends of the Forest and Environment (FEE) on board. LMI are facilitating the media component of the project and FEE worked with RICCE on an initial desk study to develop options in simple English using documents produced by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Forestry Development Authority.

In September and October 2010, five multi-stakeholder consultation fora were held at county, regional and national levels bringing together 337 participants from all 15 counties of Liberia. Participants included representatives from the private sector (including pit sawyers, timber dealers and concession holders), government (including local authorities), affected

communities (including marginalised groups) and wider civil society (including NGOs, CBOs, media and the UNMIL). The consultation aimed to ensure that the voices of the rural poor, marginalised and forest-dependent groups are heard and taken into account during the development of a regulatory framework for pit sawing activities.

The fora were widely advertised on radio dramas with jingles in English and local dialects as well as on television and radio talk shows. Visits were made to pit sawing sites and timber markets to inform the pit sawyers of the consultation, and banners advertising the fora were produced and posted at all workshop sites. Prior to the launch of the consultation, the option papers were distributed along with the invitations to help participants understand the issues and prepare for the discussions.

The main conclusion from the fora was that regulation is needed to govern pit sawing activities. Enforcement of the current ban is ineffective with many stakeholders not recognising its existence. There were diverging opinions



about the idea of permits being issued to pit sawyers and communities. Concerns were raised about this being done without any regulation or training. Superintendent of Gbarpoplu, Hon. Gertrude Lamini said “*pit sawyers are not yet given permit and they are carrying out massive chain sawing logging in the forest, if they are given permit in the absence of confirmed pit sawing regulation, it may lead to further depletion of our forest natural resources.*” Lastly, there was a fear of increased corruption, which has already had a negative impact on the sector. It was therefore felt that there is a need to standardise the industry, as weak forestry institutions cannot enforce policies and legislation effectively.



Outcomes of the Mid-Term Review

“Restructuring and building on progress made” summarises in a few words the conclusions of the GFP Mid-Term Review.

A REVIEW WAS COMMISSIONED SIX months ago to assess GFP approach and performance, draw lessons out and make recommendations on the delivery of GFP up to the end of 2011 and possible further developments after 2011.

Based on an in-depth desk analysis of documents and reports, three country visits (Mozambique, Ghana and Guatemala) and a series of interviews with people involved in the design, coordination and implementation of GFP, the reviewers identified a series of strengths and weaknesses.

One of the main strengths of GFP appears to be its timeliness and ability to respond to the increasing need to empower local forest-dependent people and ensure that their voices are heard so that they can influence policies and investments through strategic alliances.

According to the reviewers, *“GFP has come into being at an extremely challenging time for the world’s forests and forest-dwellers: the global forest-climate dialogue holds promise for forests gaining great monetary value in future climate mitigation regimes, yet the ownership of these resources and the rights of those whose livelihoods depend on them, are broadly unresolved. It is in this domain that GFP aspires to catalyse a new global dynamic”.*

The review concluded that GFP has been successfully supporting a bottom-up approach to locally controlled forestry based on local and national consultations, which are then feeding into international decision-making processes

The review also identified a number of weaknesses, including the fact that GFP aspirations have been frustrated by time constraints, a restricted budget

and inflexible reporting and financial procedures, imposed by the rigid project structure.

Looking at GFP post-2011 the reviewers proposed the following three scenarios and a set of 16 recommendations.

OPTION 1 Seek funds to continue GFP unchanged, in its present form

OPTION 2 Restructure the programme, reposition it and then seek funds for its most promising parts

OPTION 3 Abandon it altogether

The Reference Group and Catalytic Group agreed to go for Option 2 during the Strategic Meeting in Washington in January 2011 (see below).

2011 will be a crucial year with the need to shape the new governance structure of GFP and seek new sources of funding.

Exploring opportunities for GFP beyond 2011

The future of GFP was discussed at a Strategic Meeting that took place in Washington on 10–14 January 2011.

SOME OF THE QUESTIONS FLOATING at the meeting included: “What should GFP capitalise on? What are the pros and cons of scaling up? Should the future GFP focus go beyond forestry? What are the possible funding mechanisms? What about aligning with REDD-related initiatives?”

The meeting was requested by the Reference Group in September 2010 in order to explore opportunities for keeping GFP up and running beyond 2011, after which the World Bank funding will not be renewed. Six members of the Catalytic Group and three members of the Reference Group participated in the discussions.

Option 2 of the three possible future options for GFP as proposed by the Mid-Term Review (see above)

was unanimously agreed to be the best way forward. In this context, a proposal from FAO to merge the National Forest Programme Facility (Nfp) and GFP was seen as a win-win solution by all.

This new initiative, tentatively called “Local Forest Voice” (LFV), would give GFP the opportunity to scale up by benefiting from the Nfp infrastructure and network, which covers 70 countries worldwide. The Nfp would in turn benefit from the lessons learnt through GFP and begin to extend its focus from the local/national to the international.

The LFV proposal is still at a very early stage and even after four days of discussions many questions remain around its governance structure, operation and practical approaches, as well as its potential alignments with the Forest



Mike Goldwater

Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the Forest Investment Programme (FIP) and the UN REDD programme.

The consensus was that LFV looks challenging but worth exploring. The next step is the presentation of this pre-proposal at the Nfp Facility Donor Group meeting in Brussels on 18 February and the Nfp Steering Committee meeting in Durban on 22–25 February.

The Nfp Facility is a multi-donor initiative hosted at FAO and governed by a steering committee aiming to assist countries in developing and implementing nfps that effectively address local needs and national priorities and reflect internationally agreed principles. For more information, see: www.nfp-facility.org/en

Forest dialogue continues in Mombasa



The Forests Dialogue held a multi-stakeholder field dialogue on investing in locally controlled forestry (ILCF) in Mombasa, Kenya from 29 November to 2 December 2010. The objectives of the ILCF initiative are to help bridge the gap between investors and rights holders; build investment preparedness; and identify concrete actions for new partnerships

and financing mechanisms. The field dialogue brought together almost 50 stakeholders from the forest sector — 19 international and 25 national participants representing forest owners, representatives of indigenous peoples and community forestry groups, forestry investors and companies, development assistance agencies and international and national non-governmental organisations. The dialogue was hosted by the Eastern and Southern Africa Office of IUCN, with help from Forest Action Nepal and financial support from GFP.

The goal of this dialogue was to explore a set of ILCF principles and an investment process model that were proposed in a previous dialogue in London (see www.theforestdialogue.org). The participants tested these in practical field case studies and engaged in two days of discussions, which led to the following key conclusions:

GOVERNANCE: The recent policy forestry frameworks in Kenya are not yet fully understood, resulting in confusion and loss of trust. The new constitution provides a huge range of opportunities but more work is needed to clarify and communicate its implications.

PARTNERSHIPS: The field visits showed that trust is a prerequisite for any successful investment, as well as a well-organised community. In addition there needs to be a true balance between conservation and livelihood priorities. Providing livelihood alternatives to 'no-extraction' conservation efforts is key to successful sustainable forest management.

MARKETS: A common lesson learnt from all the field studies was that a pre-feasibility study is essential before entering a deal. This should include a market analysis, an assessment of the community's capacity to manage a business deal and a community impact analysis. Even in projects that were successfully implemented, the marketing component was lacking.

GOVERNMENT: In Kenya, the roles of the key agencies dealing with forest resources need to be harmonised. The new constitution provides more opportunities for communities to become formally and independently involved in sustainable forest management, but the regulations and expenses entailed in these processes could be simplified and taxes could be lowered.

REPRESENTATION: Legitimate systems of representation in Kenya are various and overlapping. More clarity is needed to determine which is the most valid and, depending on the context, which system would be most appropriate.

The discussions were extensive and productive, adding new and richer material to the draft documents produced at the London dialogue. The Forest Dialogue, along with IIED and IUCN, will pull all the information together into more elaborate drafts and continue working on developing these tools through its multi-stakeholder platform.

G3 in Cancun



THE G3 RIGHT HOLDERS GROUP, WITH support from GFP, attended the UNFCCC Climate Change negotiations in Cancun in December. Their aim was to highlight the people for whom forestry is much more than an issue of carbon dioxide — the small forest holders and forest-dependent people. At Forest Day 4, a day devoted to forestry, a fifth of the participants were official negotiating delegates. And forest issues were key to the negotiations — addressed by the Mexican President in his only appearance in Cancun. So it was important for the G3 to make a clear footprint.

Members of the Global Alliance of Community Forestry from Nepal, among others, manned a G3 booth at Forest Day representing locally controlled forestry, small forest holders and forest dependent civil rights organisations. The booth had many visitors, and posters, brochures and postcards representing each of the three alliances in the G3 were distributed.

Members of the G3 also participated in a number of learning event panels at Forest Day, as well as various side events throughout the Cancun meeting. Keynote speakers such as Nicholas Stern — who said that combating climate change must always go hand in hand with economic development and poverty eradication — helped the G3's defence for the multiple uses of forests by local people as well as the importance of forests for mitigating climate change.

Many participants were grateful for the G3's human approach and the FAO Assistant Director General Eduardo Rojas sent special thanks for their participation.

Visit us at: www.growingforestpartnerships.org

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