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IRMI QUATERLY REPORT
Oct-Dec, 2014

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADR	Alternative Disputes Resolution
AFO	Area Forest Office
BASE	Backward Society Education
CA	Constituent Assembly
CDO	Chief District Officer
CFUG	Community Forest User Group
DDA	District Development Assembly
DDC	District Development Committee
DEO	District Education Officer
DFO	District Forest Officer
DPAC	District Project Advisory Committee
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forestry Users
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FNRM	Forum for Natural Resource Management
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
IRMI	Inclusive Resource Management Initiative
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGCDP	Local Governance and Community Development Program
MC	Mercy Corps
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NRMF	Natural Resource Management Forum (NRMF)
SS	Sahakarmi Samaj
SWC	Social Welfare Council
TAF	The Asia Foundation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
WCO	Women and Children's Office

I. Program Overview/Activities

Since June 2013, Mercy Corps and two local partners – Backward Society Education (BASE) and Saharkarmi Samaj (SS) – continue to implement a two-year USAID-funded “Inclusive Resource Management Initiative (IRMI)” to support Nepal’s transition to a more peaceful, equitable society. The overarching goal remains to enhance stability through natural resource conflict resolution and inclusive natural resource management to implement program activities targeting 20 Village Development Committees (VDCs) in four districts of the western Terai, including Kailali, Bardiya, Banke and Dang Districts. The expected program beneficiaries are approximately 237,000 people living in the target areas. Out of these, the program has thus far reached 7,557 households and 45,066 family members (22,783 male and 22, 283 female).

Throughout this program in all our implementation activities, Mercy Corps and partners maintain a holistic and people-to-people approach, which:

- Facilitates the resolution of resource-based conflicts;
- Promotes inclusive decision-making related to natural resource use and management; and
- Reduces natural resource competition through joint environmental and economic initiatives.

Theories of change:

- If local decision-making related to natural resource use and management is more inclusive, then resource-related conflicts will decrease; and
- If Nepalis work together to reduce pressure on natural resources, then conflict over these resources will decline and dispute resolution agreements will be more sustainable.

Program Major Activities:

The program facilitates natural resource-based conflict resolution, promotes inclusive management and strengthens governance practices of Community Forest User Groups (CFUG), and reduces dependency on natural resources through joint environmental and economic initiatives through the following activities:

- Map natural resource conflicts;
- Conduct joint training for key stakeholders in conflict analysis;
- Facilitate the development of conflict resolution agreements;
- Strengthen community user groups’ internal governance;
- Raise awareness on natural resources rights and responsibilities;
- Support community participation in local government;
- Facilitate community peace building forums;
- Hold advocacy workshops with the relevant government bodies;
- Create joint natural resource management initiatives; and
- Support environmentally sustainable economic initiatives.

II. Highlights of this quarter achievements:

During this reporting period, Mercy Corps and its partners achieved the following with regards to IRMI.

1. Established Natural Resource Management Forum (NRMF) boards in all target 20 CFUGs as a safe place for conflict mitigation interventions.
2. Sahakarmi Samaj (SS) organized a three-day exposure visit for 41 CFUG leaders and key stakeholders of Banke district.
3. 15 community level staff from BASE and SS participated in a two-day training on CFUG Governance and Management.
4. 3-day Dialogue Skills and Community Mediation refresher training conducted for 263 key stakeholders in 14 CFUGs of four districts.
5. Proposal finalized for 20 environmentally sustainable economic and 20 natural resource management initiatives in all target CFUGs.
6. District Project Advisory Committee sessions were conducted in Dang and Bardiya districts.
7. Community level education sessions in 17 CFUGs conducted, reaching 1,655 (871 male and 784 female) community members.
8. FM radio stations produced and broadcasted 14 episodes of NRM awareness programs in four districts.
9. Key stakeholders facilitated 6 Natural Resource Management (NRM) disputes to resolution and developed agreements.
10. District level advocacy workshop on crucial NRM issues conducted in Kailali among 89 people (31 female and 58 male).
11. CFUG renewal through updating of documentation, governance training and linkages to appropriate district level offices.
12. IRMI team quarterly meeting conducted at Nepalgunj, involving 21 staff members.
13. 17 mentoring sessions conducted with 253 key stakeholders.

III. Program update by objectives

Objective 1: Strengthen the ability of key stakeholders to resolve community-level natural resource conflicts in an inclusive, sustainable manner.

Activity 1.1: Map natural resource conflicts.

Status: This activity was completed from December 2013 to February 2014. However, as the program identifies new conflicts in the target communities, we begin the process with mapping the context, dynamics and structure of those conflicts.

Activity 1.2: Conduct joint training for key stakeholders in conflict analysis and resolution.

Status: The selected key stakeholders started to intervene in the conflicts identified with the skills and knowledge acquired in five-day community mediation training. The community mediation skills helped them to facilitate conflicts related to natural resources. However, in feedback sessions, participants expressed their need to learn more advanced skills to facilitate more complex conflicts requiring multi-stakeholders. Based on their needs, the second round training was designed on Dialogue Skills and Refresher on Community Mediation followed by a five-day ToT organized in September 2014 for the IRMI staff, followed in turn by three-day training for the key stakeholders in each CFUGs.

Figure 1: A participant facilitating a dialogue model session during the training in Bardiya



Update: During this quarter, IRMI implementing partners BASE and SS conducted a three-day Dialogue Skills and Mediation Refresher training to key stakeholders in 14 CFUGs. The main objectives of the training were to refresh previous mediation skills and advance their capacity in multi-stakeholder dialogue skills so that they can deal with a much wider array and deeper complexity of conflicts related to NRM. Over this period, a total of 459 (287 male and 172 female) key stakeholders participated in the trainings. All the trainings were independently facilitated by BASE and SS staff members. To ensure the training quality, MC staff monitored those training sessions and provided

Contents of Dialogue Skills and Community Mediation Refresher Training:

- I. Sharing of the experiences; learning, and challenges;
- II. The issues and ways out; interaction and sharing;
- III. Difference between interpersonal and multi-stakeholder disputes;
- IV. Mediation process in multi-stakeholder disputes;
- V. Process designing in multi-stakeholder disputes;
- VI. Legal awareness of Local Self Governance Act and Mediation Act;
- VII. Experiencing Dialogue: Motivation Stories and Values Mapping;
- VIII. Problems where Dialogue is more relevant;
- IX. Transformative Dialogue;
- X. NRM Issues requiring Dialogue in our Context;
- XI. Dialogue as a Process: Designing Interventions

Harish Chandra Gautam, VDC Secretary in Motipur, Bardiya, said, "Community-based dialogue skills and mediation refresher training has enhanced our capacity to resolve natural resource based disputes because the mediation skills alone may not be sufficient to resolve NRM disputes. Therefore, dialogue skills have added a value to this."

Chhabi Lal Budha Magar, President of Shiva Shakti CFUG Ratanpur, Kailali said, "There are three CFUGs in ward no. 1 and there are disputes related to dual memberships, financial transactions, and forest management. As I learned dialogue skills through this training, that has enhanced my confidence level to facilitate different disputes related to natural resources."

feedback.

Activity 1.3 Facilitate the development of conflict resolution agreements by key stakeholders.

Status: The 421 trained IRMI stakeholders, with their newfound skills in multi-stakeholder dialogue and mediation, are working together for natural resource conflict mitigations in their communities. Stakeholders completed setting up the "Natural Resource Management Forum (NRMF)" as a safe place for conflict mitigation interventions.

Update: During this reporting period, out of 23 ongoing disputes cases, IRMI key stakeholders facilitated six disputes to resolution in the target communities related to natural resources, using dialogue and mediation skills. Most of the cases are around conflict created after the dismissal of a forest guard, land encroachments, timber distributions, grazing forests, and firewood distribution. Key stakeholders also helped resolve many disputes related to non-NRM issues. This activity is ongoing as per the work plan and log frame target.

Objective 2: Increase inclusive and participatory resource-related decision-making among community and government bodies.

Activity 2.1: Strengthen internal governance of community user groups.

Status: In April 2014, the IRMI program team facilitated community user groups' self-capacity assessments. The assessment was built on five main indicators: 1. Resource availability, 2. Organizational capacity of CFUGs, 3. Inclusion of the poor and the excluded communities, 4. Forest management, and 5. Coordination and collaboration between groups/bodies. During these sessions, the user groups identified their gaps. Examples include: lack of transparency, low participation of group members in meetings, exclusion of marginalized groups, internal leadership and coordination issues with and between like-minded organization/bodies, no financial accountability system in place, and poor service delivery. Based on the gaps identified, IRMI and CFUGs continue to design capacity building programs for each user group, implemented by BASE and Sahakarmi Samaj with oversight by the Mercy Corps team. To address some of those issues, implementing partners conducted governance and advocacy training sessions for the stakeholders and members of CFUGs. However, challenges still remain. Because of the internal conflicts in some of the CFUGs, they could not implement operational plans on time and could not complete annual mandatory activities as per the 'Guidelines for Community Forest Development Program' on time.

Update: IRMI local partners continue to conduct weekly/monthly meetings with CFUGs to discuss some of the gaps that exist between them and provide follow-up mentoring to the groups. These include regular follow up, meetings, orientation sessions, learning sharing sessions, etc.

Regular public auditing and general assembly meetings were not held in many of the CFUGs. Therefore, based on their capacity development plan, the IRMI team is pushing CFUGs to meet the government requirements for their smooth operation. Recently, Jana Ekata Mahila Madhewardi CFUG, Rajhena conducted a public audit and general assembly meeting with 1,771 user participants. They developed a culture to endorse all the outside support in their general assemblies. They endorsed all IRMI activities, including economic and environmental initiatives and have incorporated the community mediation/reconciliation subcommittee in their constitution. In this way, all the users are aware on each and every activity of the CFUGs, including budget and expenditures. IRMI staff is also participating in the regular monthly meetings of the CFUGs. During meetings, they support the development and review of plans and manage data. They also encourage the CFUGs to follow action plans accordingly, establish culture of positive and effective coordination, generate resources, raise awareness on the Guidelines for Community Forestry Development Program 2065, raise awareness amongst users as to the roles and responsibilities of Key Stakeholders and of users, keep proper documentation, encourage them to conduct annual audits, ensure inclusive participation, and work toward more equitable resource distribution and management.

The FM radio programs, regular education sessions by the experts and regular meetings inform users on how to maintain good governance practices in their CFUGs. The government officers from District/Sector/Area Forest Offices are mobilized to educate general members and executive boards. A total of 18 CFUGs completed their annual audits and general assembly. According to government provisions, all CFUGs have to renew their operation plans and constitutions every five years. As the eight CFUGs have completed five years, the time has come to renew their operational plans and constitutions. Among them, seven completed well-being rankings and are at the final stage for operational plan and constitutions renewal process. All IRMI target CFUGs are holding their monthly meetings regularly.

CFUG Governance and Management Training: IRMI found a strong need to strengthen CFUGs' understanding and capacities on good governance in order to improve their internal governance system, documentation, empowerment of CFUG executive board members toward a greater sense of ownership, and proper office management. Fifteen field-based staff from BASE and SS participated in a two-day Governance and Management Training on 25-26 December 2014 in Nepalgunj. Executive Director Mr. Narad Pd. Sharma, Mr. Rajaram Gupta and Mr. Amar Bahadur Air from SS facilitated the training. The field-based staff expressed satisfaction with the utility of the training in strengthening their capacities to impart their knowledge to improve CFUG governance systems.

Exposure Visit: A total of 41 (27 male and 14 female) CFUG members, including key stakeholders from Banke district participated in a three-day (21-23 Dec 2014) exposure visit to Dang, Nawalparasi and Chitwan districts. The main objectives of the visit were to learn improved management skills, good practices for inclusivity, how to establish and maintain transparency, how to carry out forest-based entrepreneurship planning, coordination skills and other policy implementations. The team observed watershed



Figure 2: Exposure visit: Members and stakeholders in interaction

management, a zero grazing area and learned about the income generation practices, effective forest management skills and forest product distribution system in Kalapani CFUG of Dang district. In Nawalparasi, they visited the Laligunras CFUG in Chhotetari. At the time of handover of the community forest land, there were no trees in the forestland. After taking over the area, CFUGs members planted trees, which grew into a very dense forest. The Laligunras CFUG is managed by community women leaders. The team then visited another well-managed forest of Ranikhola CFUG in Chitwan. They allocated 35% of total CFUG income toward poverty alleviation for their poor users through targeted subsidies for goat rearing, pig rearing and vegetable farming. They provide Rs. 2000 to pregnant women users for their dietary supplements along with stipends, as well as provide selected at-risk senior citizens with stipends. The teams commented on the commendable and tangible work of these CFUGs in community development and forest management, which they said was quite inspiring.

Activity 2.2: Raise awareness of rights and responsibilities related to natural resources

Status: Following the training of IRMI program key stakeholders in May/June 2014 on resource-based conflict analysis, interest-based negotiation and dispute resolution skills, efforts were made to gather information, education and communication (IEC) materials in a bid to support district and local-level awareness raising campaigns on the rights and responsibilities related to natural resource use and management. Mercy Corps coordinated with the District Development Committee (DDC) and District Forest Office (DFO) officials and user group networks to plan and execute an extension education program on government policies related to natural resources and the rights of various categories of Nepalis. The program includes mass media such as FM radio and community outreach meetings with an emphasis on reaching women and marginalized groups. This activity kicked-off in July 2014, and will continue throughout the project period. IRMI conducted a rapid assessment on the advocacy issues that are hindering the target CFUGs' operations. As a result of this assessment, an advocacy workshop was conducted in Kailali district among the concerned stakeholders to address the issues.

Update:

FM radio programs: To raise awareness regarding natural resource use and management, IRMI mobilized the power of the media by organizing FM radios programs for wider outreach and impact. The FM radio programs, named '*Hamro Ban Ramro Ban*,' ('Our Forest, Good Forest') are being developed by the respective FM stations in close coordination with the program team and are broadcasted regularly on a weekly/bi-monthly basis. In the first episode, they introduce IRMI and its importance to the people in simple language. Follow-up

episodes are developed based on the community needs, which include reporting from the field with the



Figure 3: Radio Program recording in Hirminiya, Banke

I am listening to the "Hamro Ban Ramro Ban" radio program, which is very interesting and knowledgeable, because the FM station airs it during prime time in the morning. In addition, their programs are based on emerging issues and are empowerment focused."- Shridhar Pandey, Program Officer, Care Nepal, Hariyo Ban program, Banke.

"The program is very important and informative to us and all people should listen to it regularly." Youbaraj Paudel, one of the IRMI key stakeholders of Rajhena, Banke.

"Oh it is good!" Mr. Jaya Mangal Prasad, DFO, Banke.

community people's voice on their issues/concerns/solutions/knowledge/practice, etc and interaction with the experts. One FM radio station in each of the four districts is mobilized to develop and broadcast programs. In this reporting period, 14 FM programs were aired. The community's response towards the program is thus far quite encouraging.

Natural Resource Education Sessions: The education sessions were used to raise the awareness of rights and responsibilities related to natural resource use and management and to promote community participation in the government decision-making process related to natural resource use management at local levels. The sessions were conducted for 2.5 to 3 hours in each CFUG by the experts within the CFUG area. In this reporting period, 17 education sessions in 17 CFUGs were carried out in four districts. Altogether, 1,646 (869 male and 777 female) participants participated in the natural resource related



Figure 4: Dhan Raj Mandal, Assistant Forest Officer, imparting education session in Viedharsonpur CFUG, Pawannager, Dang

* Lallu Ram Tharu, Advisor of Bhadohi Mahila CFUG Mainapokhar, Bardiya, said, " Community people are using resources unsystematically, and this education session will minimize or control those forbidden activities. Therefore, education sessions need to be conducted frequently in CFUGs."

* Chunnu Ram Tharu, co-secretary of Ekata CFUG Motipur, Bardiya, said, "We have been conserving the forest for years but are not aware of the Guidelines for Community Forestry Development Program, including the executive committee members. Now in this education session, they are informed about the guidelines and are committed to managing and using the forest accordingly."

* Yam Lal Bhadari, Ranger, Purandhara Ilaka Forest Office, said, "Devidanda CFUG executive committee was not active. They did not conduct meetings and did not audit on time. They did not even participate in the meeting called by the Ilaka Forest Office. After IRMI, they have been active and they now know how to do an audit and by whom this should be done. Now they have close coordination and collaboration with the Ilaka Forest Office and are working closely as well. Now, whenever they meet us on the way, they talk about forest issues and express their concerns."

education sessions. Those education sessions focused on the following main topics:

- Some historical background and concept of CFUG emergence in Nepal.
- Generation-wise community forestry development regime in Nepal: i.e. first, second and third generations (in brief).
- Brief introduction on rules & regulations.
- Guidelines for Community Forest Development Program.
- Some restrictions; i.e., dos & don'ts in community forest as per existing forest laws/acts/policies/regulations
- Constitution and work plan of CFUG.
- Wildlife Act 2029, Use of stone, concrete and sand.
- Roles and responsibilities of the CFUG board members.

Activity 2.3: Support community participation in government decision-making processes.

Status: Mercy Corps and partners are exploring opportunities to coordinate these activities with the Local Governance and Community Development Program's (LGCDP's) Citizen Awareness Center and Ward Citizen Forums when appropriate. This will build on the extension education program by

ensuring that community members have the skills and opportunity to voice their concerns and propose solutions so that government plans are shaped by community priorities. BASE and Sahakarmi Samaj, with oversight by Mercy Corps, are working with user groups and community members, particularly women's groups and marginalized communities, in the 20 target sites to identify opportunities for participation in the government planning processes, develop strategies for articulating their demands, and participate in government planning processes.

As per the revised IRMI work plan, this activity was slated for October through November 2014. Mercy Corps and partners coordinated with the necessary bodies to formulate strategies on how government decision-making can filter down through community participation. The CFUGs are now aware of the forest development planning process, but could not get the exact dates for the planning from the concerned offices.

Updates: Mercy Corps and partners have established contacts with Local Governance and Community Development Program's (LGCDP's) Citizen Awareness Center and Ward Citizen Forums. IRMI community level staff shared the 14-step government planning process in the CFUG regular meetings with members and encouraged them to become the part of the process to include forest development activities from the settlement level planning.

Advocacy Workshop. IRMI program partner, Backward Society Education (BASE) in collaboration with FECOFUN, concluded a one-day consultative dialogue meeting between Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs), District Forest Officer (DFO), District Development Committee (DDC), and FECOFUN central committee members in Kailali on 7th December 2014. This meeting sought to ensure that community members have the opportunity to voice their concerns and propose solutions so that government plans are shaped by community priorities. The direct consultative meeting facilitated by FECOFUN and Journalist Pikaram Sunar brought together representatives from each of the affected CFUGs to highlight and question the DFO, DDC and FECOFUN on issues important to them. These included: *"Why is the DFO preventing CFUGs to access their bank accounts as a result of unclear policy? Why are CFUGs being prevented from accessing timber from the forest according to their approved operational plans, while others benefit from these resources? And Why are CFUGs being prevented from accessing and managing the ponds, gravel, sand, etc. within their community forest?"* This same scenario held for other CFUGs in other districts where the IRMI program operates, wherein the CFUGs think the leadership should revise some of these policies that are already breeding resentment and could lead to violent confrontations if left unchecked. Mercy Corps and partners will continue to explore opportunities to coordinate these activities with FECOFUN in the affected districts as appropriate within the context of each district.

Figure 5: Advocacy workshop in Kailali



This meeting created a conducive forum where DFO, DDC and FECOFUN and CFUG leaders effectively identified and explained the underlying logic that might include multiple inter-related community forest management and the need for other poor local residents to access some of the natural resources according to local policies. The community people had the till now rare opportunity to share their concerns and issues directly with the district authorities. The meeting was

attended by 89 people (31 female and 58 male). A follow up meeting with the DFO and DDC to redress the issues raised is still pending, though being followed closely by the IRMI team.

Objective 3: Enhance the sustainability of negotiated agreements by engaging communities in joint environmental and economic development initiatives.

Activity 3.1: Community peace building forums.

Status: Shortly after stakeholder training sessions in May/June 2014, trained members started convening a series of forums in each target site to disseminate information about the conflict resolution agreements and to discuss how the agreement can be supported through changes in natural resource use and management and alternative economic opportunities. This activity is ongoing since July 2014 and will be continued.

Updates: To ensure sustainability, CFUGs formed peacebuilding/conflict mitigation sub-committees under the executive committees in their constitutions. To add value to this, they named themselves Natural Resource Management Forums (NRMF) and placed signboards and each forum is now equipped with the necessary stationery supplies. The trained key stakeholders in these forums are working actively to mitigate natural recourse based conflicts. The forum meets and coordinates with the CFUG executive committee to discuss the objectives of the peace forums. Trained key stakeholders started convening a series of forums in each target site to disseminate information about the conflict resolution agreements and to discuss how the agreement can be supported through changes in natural resource use and management and alternative economic opportunities. CFUG members, along with the key stakeholders, participate actively in the identification of environmentally sustainable economic and natural resource management initiatives as a way to prevent/mitigate some of the natural resource conflicts. The community participated in a participatory wellbeing rankings process to categorize members of the CFUGs. Based on the rankings, they jointly decided to provide income generation schemes starting with their most deprived members.



Figure 7: Key stakeholders after Signboard installation at Neulapur, Bardiya

Gorakh Bahadur Bam Chairman, Kopila CFUG Neulapur, says, "This board is a symbol of peace and reconciliation. We will facilitate all the related disputes through mediation and dialogue and, in turn, there will be peace and harmony in our community."



Figure 6: Key stakeholders sharing meeting at Ratanpur, Kaiali

Altogether, 253 key stakeholders participated in 17 mentoring/sharing sessions to share the challenges faced, the learning encountered during dispute resolutions and how to find possible solutions. During the sessions, stakeholders shared their experience about the dispute mitigation progress and informed participants about the agreements reached. In the same forums, trainers further explained to key stakeholders about the tools and techniques of dispute resolution. They also discussed the emerging issues of the CFUGs, including; annual General Assembly, financial transaction, audits, implementation of annual work plans, renewal process, etc.

Activity 3.2: Joint natural resource management initiatives

Status: The activities related to conserve, manage and utilize the natural resources will continue till the end of the project. In the summer session, despite the different types of community conflicts, community members were jointly involved in planting forestlands. The IRMI teams also held a series of consultative meetings with CFUGs and the DFO/National Park Office to identify joint initiatives for natural resource management to help reduce resource demand, limit environmental degradation and promote cooperation.

Updates: Currently, 20 target CFUGs finalized joint natural resource initiatives and finalized their proposals. The active implementation of those initiatives will start from early January 2015. Conflict sensitivity lenses were used to identify those initiatives and will also continue through the implementation period. The initiatives that have the potential to mitigate the existing conflict and protect/or promote/or develop the local natural resources were taken as first priority. The finalized initiatives include barbed wire fencing, trench digging, bio-check dam, Aegle marmelos (*Bel*) conservation, plantation, and nursery establishment. The communities are required to match at least 25% of the total cost in-kind or in cash for the initiatives. Those initiatives will be implemented in close coordination and with support from the DFO/National Park Office. The CFUGs also have written permission from the DFO/National Park Office to implement the initiatives.

Figure 8: Consultative meeting with Jharsaluwa CFUG, Bardiya to finalize economic initiative



The activity is implemented alongside the environmentally sustainable economic activities. To reinforce their current activities as a way to inform the general population, a slogan has been coined “*Plant trees, not conflict,*” in a bid to create awareness and mitigate localized conflicts associated with natural resource management.

Activity 3.3: Support environmentally sustainable economic initiatives

Status: This activity kicked off in July 2014. Since then, the program team held a series of consultative meetings in the target CFUGs to identify and prioritize the activities based on an agreed selection criteria developed by the technical staff with support from Mercy Corps’ Market Development Specialists. In addition, consultative meetings with the DFO/National Park Office were conducted to solicit their advice and get their permission letter to implement the initiatives.

Update: A total of 20 Environmentally Sustainable Economic Initiatives were identified and the proposal development process was finalized using a participatory method where community members, including women and marginalized groups, participate in the entire process. The main

objective is to reduce natural resource demand, limit environmental degradation, promote cooperation and strengthen economic opportunities that mitigate natural resource use and management issues driving local disputes. During the identification process, conflict sensitivity lenses were used so that the initiatives would not exacerbate existing conflict contexts. The initiatives finalized are: goat rearing, mushroom farming, nursery management, leaf-plate making, vegetable farming, and bamboo handicrafts/furniture. Members had previously also identified piggeries as a desired activity, but this was rejected by the DFO. The main intention was to engage deprived users in alternative income generation activities so that they would not have to rely solely on forest resources for their livelihoods. In turn, the conflicts due to forest products robbery should see a marked decrease.

IV. Other Activities:

District Project Committee Advisory Committee (DPAC) meeting:

According to the mandatory provision of the Social Welfare Council (SWC), the District Project Advisory Committee meeting should be organized in each project district on a bi-annual basis. In this reporting period, DPAC meetings were organized in Dang and Bardiya districts. The DPAC meeting in Dang was organized on Oct 19, 2014 and in Bardiya on December 3, 2014 with the prime objectives to review the program progress, achievements and challenges faced during the project implementation. In addition, the concerned stakeholders also provided necessary feedback to the project team on implemented activities thus far. Both the meetings were chaired by the District Development Committee representatives and representatives from the District Forest Office, Local Peace Committee and FECOFUN as

Figure 9: Planning Officer, Sunder Shrestha, DDC Bardiya giving his closing remarks at DPAC meeting



Puspa Raj Shahi, Local Development Officer, Dang, said, "It would be more effective to include the hardware program along with the software."

Bam Bahadur DC, Coordinator, Local Peace Committee, Dang, said, "The program should mandate the inclusion of the VDC level local peace committee members in the program."

Khil Bahadur Tamang, Acting DFO, Bardiya, said, "The project is based on the forestry sector; the project period is short, so there is a need to increase the duration of the project. The income generation activity will support the CFUGs' income and will help decrease dependency on the forest to some extent."

FECOFUN General Secretary, Man Bahadur Bista, said, "The BASE IRMI program and FECOFUN should work together regarding the governance part of the CFUG."

members of the DPAC team. In Dang there were 5 (all male) participants and in Bardiya there were 7 (6 male and 1 female) participants in the meeting.

Afghan leaders' exposure visit to IRMI community:

District Development Assemblies (DDA) from Afghanistan visited the BASE office and IRMI community at Devidada Community Forestry Users Group (CFUG), Purandhara, Dang, as a learning exposure visit on 19th December 2014. The program was part of a Mercy Corps Afghanistan initiative to build the governance capacity of provincial and district level government officials. A team of seven people, including four DDA chairmen, one senior officer from the Provincial Office and two Mercy Corps Afghanistan senior staff were warmly welcomed by the community people. The team of visitors observed the CFUG office and the community.

Figure 10: Afghan visitors in an interaction program with Devidada CFUG users



In addition, the CFUG organized an open interaction program with the visitors for almost two hours. The Devidada CFUG secretary shared their background information, problems/challenges they faced, and achievements from the IRMI program. The representative from the Area Forest Office also shared the progress of the Devidada CFUG in this project period. Other key stakeholders shared their success in mitigating a complicated conflict related to forestland encroachments. Other users also shared their experiences with the team. General and executive members responded to the visitors' queries. Visitors also responded to some of the queries from the community people. The visitors shared that 'the women do not participate with men for development/social activity in Afghanistan', which the community found quite surprising. The community people asked the visitors many questions about their governance structures, if there were

Aynullah, DDA chairman, said, "I have not imagined that the women can also participate actively in such social work and play a vital role in community development. This is why Nepal is progressing rapidly."

Usama, senior officer from Provincial Office said, "This visit is very fruitful to us. We observed that the community people are working together to manage their CFUG effectively, regardless of caste, gender and class. I will share this with our leaders in Afghanistan about how the joint work of men and women can achieve a lot."

bodies similar to CFUGs in Afghanistan, how common natural resources were managed and more. The remote village people were very pleased to meet and interact with the visitors from such a completely different context.

V. Background/Contextual Update

Natural resources are an integral part of any society, as they provide sources of income, industry, and identity. It is estimated that half of the world's population remains directly tied to local natural resources; many rural communities depend upon agriculture, fisheries, minerals and timber as their main sources of income. Developing countries like Nepal tends to be more dependent on natural resources as their primary source of income and many individuals depend on these resources for their livelihoods. Among them, forest is an important renewable natural resource for economic

development, reducing the impact of climate change and increasing sustainability of the resource base. Both scarcity and resource abundance could lead to natural resource conflict. Whatever may be the cause; natural resource conflicts have the potential to jeopardize the economy, livelihoods, governance, general stability and other resources of a country. Therefore, timely and appropriate conflict management is crucial for sustainable use, conservation and management of natural resources and the livelihoods and economies tied to them. The picture gets much more complicated when access to these natural resources become the reason for a conflict or, much more frequently, are used to fuel a conflict. This forms the foundation upon which IRMI is built on and thus seek to address some of these resource-based conflicts in the Terai region of Nepal.

Local residents in the Terai region continue to struggle with resource-based conflicts, which Mercy Corps, partners and the trained IRMI stakeholders known as the "*Natural Resource Management Forum*" (NRMF), Community Forest User Groups and other like-minded partners are trying to address through environmentally sustainable, community-endorsed activities. In this context, there is a demand for Alternative Disputes Resolution (ADR) to bring peace and harmony between and among rural communities conflicting over natural resources. From among the ADR approaches, community mediation and multi-stakeholder dialogue are among the most effective methods of dispute resolutions to draw win-win resolutions based on the interests of the disputants and settled using a democratic approach for both or all parties.

In the latter portion of this first year, IRMI involved district stakeholders and other like-minded organizations in jointly identifying the issues that hinder CFUG operations and discussing them at district level for resolution. This activity is gaining support on the ground from district leadership. Pressing issues in the western Terai include: The DFOs preventing CFUGs from accessing their bank accounts as a result of unclear policies; CFUGs being prevented from accessing timber from the forest according to their approved operational plans, while others benefit from these resources; and CFUGs being prevented from accessing and managing the ponds, gravel, sand and other resources within their community forests. Identification of these issues is, of course, only a preliminary, though necessary, step in the process of actually addressing them. This process continues through the creating and attending of forums with the appropriate CFUG and government stakeholders to voice and discuss the issues, creating space for their ultimate addressing and resolution. This in effect helps create the necessary *linkages* required to connect CFUGs to the government services to which they should have and require access if they are to remain effective, responsive and sustainable.

However, the Nepalese formal legal system is still far from reaching the poor, marginalized, women and religious minorities, especially in the project locations. As the legal system is costly and tardy, poor and marginalized people lack access to basic rights or have little to no opportunity to voice their concerns. In such a situation, the Natural Resource Management Forum (NRMF) established at CFUG levels can play a crucial role in resolving disputes and can substantively contribute to bringing long-lasting peace in the affected communities in Banke, Bardiya, Dang and Kailali districts in partnership with the program's two local partners: Backward Society Education (BASE) and Sahakarmi Samaj (SS).

VI. Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges

- Government staff members in concerned offices change frequently. Once the government official begins to understand and participate actively in the program, he/she gets transferred and the new official or staff member takes time to become familiar with the program and supply necessary support. We faced just this challenge in Dang district. In addition, government procedures for the CFUG operational plan approval takes time to work its way through the DFO and that has delayed some of the IRMI activities, largely due to the fact that the CFUGs, after working in developing their plans and associated budgets, then have to wait for the lengthy approval, budget submission and then the approved allocation.
- IRMI selected communities are based on the severity and frequency of conflicts. Therefore, most of the communities are embedded in conflicts and could not fulfill government requirements. This then delays the renewal of operational plans, annual general assemblies, auditing, and so on. Without meeting those requirements, the DFO has limited CFUGs' access to their bank accounts. Therefore, IRMI is working directly with the CFUGs and the appropriate government authorities to help CFUGs settle those crucial issues before implementing environmentally sustainable economic and natural resource initiatives. That has become a challenge to the IRMI team in accelerating economic and NRM initiatives on time, but the necessity of helping establish sound internal governance structures must take priority for their long-term viability over the more output-oriented initiatives.
- Some of the target CFUGs do not have a designated office. Therefore, they face difficulties in systematically maintaining their official files. Some of the documents are with the chairperson, some with the secretary, and so on. With such de facto procedures, some CFUGs have lost important documents. In addition, they are facing difficulties in managing the safe place for conflict mitigation interventions.

Lessons Learned

- Exposure visits have become an inspiration to the Banke district CFUG leaders to improve their community forests management. The direct observation and interaction visits with different communities to see firsthand and discuss their good practices have become a very good means through which to gain practical, working knowledge. Therefore, IRMI has planned similar exposure visits for the remaining three districts to bring this practical experience sharing to those target CFUGs.
- IRMI is working with those CFUGs embedded haphazardly into conflicts, which have blocked their overall developments. To both mitigate conflicts and work for the overall development of the CFUGs is time-consuming process. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly clear that this type of program should be more than three years in duration.
- Natural resource education sessions conducted in the target CFUGs are found to be most effective in making people aware of policies, guidelines, action plans and other concerned acts related to CFUGs. Many of the CFUG executive members told the IRMI team it was during these sessions that they first heard about those government regulations. Therefore, IRMI has planned extra education sessions in the communities.

VII. Coordination/Review Meetings

- In this quarter, the SS and BASE organized monthly and quarterly staff meetings. During these meetings, the team shares their progress, challenges and learning including orientation sessions. In the meetings, they also develop detailed work plans.

- The IRMI team participated in a meeting organized by USAID/Sajhedari Bikaas on November 5, 2014 to see the opportunities for coordination and collaboration between other USAID funded projects.
- IRMI is regularly participating in DG monthly meetings followed by the project specific monthly meeting with USAID.
- 21 individuals participated in a two-day IRMI team quarterly meeting in Nepalgunj. The meeting discussed and shared the progress, pending activities, TraiNet data management, No Cost Extension and other emerging issues.

VIII. Monitoring and Evaluation

Mercy Corps continues to provide technical support to partner staff to conduct planned activities more effectively. Capacity-building trainings for partner staff and checking the monitoring tools during and after every training have helped the IRMI team to remain focused. On-site coaching is also being used to steer project activities. The BASE and SS executive teams are also engaged in monitoring project activities and providing regular necessary feedback to the project team. That has helped smooth project implementation in the field and coordination at district level. Mercy Corps is documenting quarterly beneficiary data through partner activities. The Mercy Corps Design, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, together with the IRMI team, is analyzing and reporting on data to USAID and stakeholders. IRMI program staff continues to analyze data on a monthly basis to inform project management decisions via USAID's TraiNet database. Monitoring focuses on reviewing program achievements/accomplishments versus targets, identifying issues and concerns affecting program implementation, and recommending corrective measures when necessary.

IX. Conclusion

Mercy Corps continues to accelerate IRMI activities through close collaboration with partners and trained key stakeholders, who have taken over organizing community-led consultative/mitigation meetings around natural resource managements. During this reporting period, the IRMI team completed identification and proposal finalization for 20 environmentally sustainable economic initiatives and 20 natural resource management initiatives. Those initiatives are identified and screened with the active participation of the target people and in regular consultation with the DFO/National Park Office to ensure sustainability. The initiatives are ready for implementation starting from early January 2015.

Conflict mitigation is a process-focused initiative and demands sufficient time and energy to bridge relationships among and between the conflicting parties. Therefore, IRMI has implemented a variety of activities involving a wide range of people from community to national levels. Trained key stakeholders are working voluntarily in the Natural Resource Management Forums to facilitate different types of conflicts related to natural resources. Being accountable towards the communities, they are also dealing with other conflicts that come within their jurisdictions. They are happy with two rounds of capacity building trainings thus far provided and will receive at least one additional round in the near future. The needs-based trainings supplied are found very helpful in facilitating the mitigation of conflicts in the communities. Their motivation is found to be quite encouraging. The CFUGs have provisioned for Peacebuilding/Conflict Management sub-committees within their constitutions, which we feel better ensures sustainability of the IRMI conflict mitigation interventions.

The findings of the DRR survey conducted in Bardiya, Banke, Dang and Kailali districts points to the need for IRMI (and indeed other similar programs) to be expanded to embrace an integrated, relevant and well thought out DRR component. The findings show the need for the integration of natural resource management, DRR and income generation/market development activities. To respond to some of these issues within the program, IRMI made efforts to respond to flood damages in the target communities. Under natural resource initiatives, three of our targets CFUGs finalized the development of bioengineering check dams to prevent river cuttings and to protect forestlands and users' homes.

The natural resource education sessions conducted in communities have encouraging numbers of participants and receive positive comments. The communities are getting the opportunity to learn directly from the district level Forest Officers about their relevant NRM issues. In addition, they get the opportunity to query officials about their issues directly and do not hesitate to approach government offices for the necessary support, now that they are aware these exist. At the same time, and of equal importance, government officials are now more aware of the issues that exist in these communities and, with these increased face-to-face meetings, are more compelled to at least make the attempt to help address their issues. These events have opened that direct communication between community and district authorities. FM radio-based mobilizations in all four districts are also found effective, reaching a wide range of populations. They have helped to spread the grassroots issues, concerns, news, voices, successes, challenges, etc. in public so that other CFUGs can benefit from the information and authorities can get better informed. The FM radio-based interaction programs with the experts are disseminating messages related to effective natural resource management and use to a much larger catchment of individuals and households than is contained in the target areas.

The advocacy workshop informed stakeholders to give serious attention to the crucial issues of managing and protecting natural resources effectively. The workshop encouraged district and national level actors to take timely mitigating action before simmering conflicts break out.

The IRMI team at the field level is pushing CFUGs to implement their capacity development plans in accordance to the agreed upon time frame, resulting in 18 of the target CFUGs having completed their audits, conducted annual general assemblies and submitted progress reports following their annual work plans to the DFO on time. CFUGs are now holding regular meetings and are exercising the practice of endorsement and approval from their members of their activities before they draft their plans.

Despite the program's late start and the very nature of effective and inclusive conflict mitigation necessarily being patient and time consuming, the program is progressing satisfactorily. The 'inclusive nature' of the program, although time consuming, is also the beauty of this type of peacebuilding initiative. At the same time, the process-focused program demands sufficient time and engagement, so that it can leave a lasting, positive impact in the communities. The achievements so far and the communities' interest in the program are very encouraging.

X. Upcoming activities

Project activities for the next quarter will include the following:

1. Implement joint natural resource management initiatives in the target CFUGs;
2. Support and implement environmentally sustainable economic initiatives;

3. Incorporate some DRR activities into current IRMI activities;
4. Support community peacebuilding forums;
5. Support community participation in government decision-making processes;
6. Continue to strengthen internal governance of CFUGs;
7. Monitor dispute resolution agreements; and
8. Organize advocacy workshops at district levels.

XI. Annexes:

Annex I: Details of Dialogue Skills and Community Mediation Refresher Training participants:

District	Name of CFUG	Date	Name of Resource Person	# of Participants		
				M	F	Total
Bardiya	Kotahi Mahila	Oct 19 to 21,2014	Rama Chaudhary & Laxmi Bhandari	15	5	20
	Ekta Samaj	Oct 12 to 14,2014	Manoj Chaudhary, Rama Chaudhary & Laxmi Bhandari	13	7	20
	Bhadohi Mahila	Oct 16 to 18,2014	Rama Chaudhary & Laxmi Bhandari	10	13	23
	Jharasaluwa	Nov 2 to 4, 2014	Rama Chaudhary & Laxmi Bhandari	11	8	19
Dang	Devidanda	Oct 12 to 14, 2014	Shanta Chaudhary & Renuka Chaudhary	12	8	20
	Srijana	Oct 12 to 14, 2014	Tak Bdr Chaudhary & Hemant Chaudhary	13	7	20
	Viedharsonpur	Oct 20 to 22, 2014	Tak Bdr Chaudhary & Renuka Chaudhary	13	6	19
Kailali	Kamal Pokhari	Oct 26to 28, 2014	Shava Thapa & Jagdish Chaudhary	6	10	16
	Suryodaya	Oct 29 to 31, 2014	Lokjan Chaudhary & Jagdish Chaudhary	10	8	18
	Shivashakti	Oct 29 to 31, 2014	Anta Ram Chaudhary & Shova Thapa	10	8	18
Banke	Miteri	Oct 13-15, 2014	Partima Rana, Man Bir Nepali, Tank Bdr. Pun	7	9	16
	Sungava	Oct 13-15, 2014	Partima Rana, Gita Budha, Hemraj Bhatta	8	11	19
	Jaya Saraswoti	Oct 17-19, 2014	Gita Budha, Hem Raj Bhatta and Pratima Rana	5	15	20
	Jana Ekata Mahila Madhyaworti	Oct 17-19, 2014	Partima Rana, Binita Chaudhary, Man Bir Nepali and Tank Bdr. Pun	6	9	15
Total				139	124	263

Annex II: Summary of Education Sessions

District	Name of CFUG	VDC/Venue	Date	Name of Resource Person	# of Participants		
					M	F	Total
Dang	Devidada	Purandhara-8, Babarpur	8 Dec. 2014	Yam Lal Bhandari, Ranger	22	37	59
	Saat Pokhari Hurum	Panchakule-4, Charakmatiya	10 Dec. 2014	Om Parsad Oli, Assistant Forest Officer	25	45	70
		Panchakule-8, Krishnapur	11 Dec. 2014	Om Parsad Oli, Assistant Forest Officer	18	21	39
	Srijana CFUG	Shantinager- 7, Jimwaltole	11 Dec. 2014	Dhan Raj Mandel, Assistant Forest Officer	58	30	88
		Shantinager- 7, Valanity	12 Dec. 2014	Dhan Raj Mandel, Assistant Forest Officer	45	43	88
	Viudahar Sonpur CFUG	Pawanager-4, Ghorbanda	14 Dec. 2014	Dhan Raj Mandel, Assistant Forest Officer	67	73	140
		Pawanager-9, Kuirepani	15 Dec. 2014	Dhan Raj Mandel, Assistant Forest Officer	74	49	123
	Jarayo Takuri CFUG	Halwar-5, Ghorney	16 Dec. 2014	Braham Dev Mahato, Assistant Forest Officer	30	34	64
		Halwar-5, Gahatera	17 Dec. 2014	Braham Dev Mahato, Assistant Forest Officer	30	34	64
	Bardiya	Ekata Samaj CFUG	Motipur 7 Damauli	4 Dec. 2014	Kausalendra Saha, Assistant Forest Officer	70	24
Bhadohi Mahila CFUG		Mainapokhar -9, Bhadohi	3 Dec. 2014	Rama Chaudhary, Social Mobilizer	112	106	218
Kopila CFUG		Neulapur- 9 Godana	3 Dec. 2014	Nagendra Prashad Sharma, Forest Assistant	37	23	60
Jharasaluwa CFUG		Bagnaha-3, Mirchaiya	6 Dec. 2014	Rajendra Prashad Timilsina, Assistant Forest Officer	84	89	173
Kotahi Mahila CFUG		Dhodhari-5, Gamakatole	5 Dec. 2014	Lalan Rawat, Assistant Forest Officer	28	65	93
Kailali	Shahid Sanghari Bhimdatta Pant CFUG	Geta-1, Khuna Tole	26 Dec. 2014	Krishna Bahadur Bohara, Assistant Forest Officer	13	35	48
	Sita Ram CFUG	Beladevipur- 6, Boring Tole	27 Dec, 2014	Krishna Bahadur Bohara, Assistant Forest Officer	48	12	60

Banke	Miteri CFUG	Lakhana, Kohalpur		Ram Kumar Chaudhary, ADFO, AFO, Kohalpur	21	8	29
	Jana Ekata Mahila CFUG	Janaekata Building, Shaktinagar	12 Dec 2014	Lal Bdr. Bhandari, ACO, BaNP	29	25	54
	Sungava CFUG	Sungabha Building, Kalarampur		Tek Bdr. Shahi, Forester	22	22	44
	Hajrat CFUG	Jangalisimpuruwa, Hirminiya		Lalit Yadav, ADFO	36	2	38
Total					869	777	1,646

Annex III: Environmentally Sustainable Economic Initiatives

District	VDC	CFUG Name	Name of the Economic Initiatives	Budget Estimated NPR		
				Requested from MC-N	Community Contribution in cash/kind	Total Budget
Dang	Pawananager	Viedahar Sonpur	Goat and Pig Rearing	240,000.00	60,400.00	300,400.00
	Purandhara	Devidanda	Goat Rearing	240,000.00	160,000.00	400,000.00
	Panchakule	Satpokhari Hurum	Goat Rearing	240,000.00	60,900.00	300,900.00
	Halwar	Jarayotakuri	Goat Rearing and Mushroom farming	240,000.00	60,000.00	300,000.00
	Shantinager	Srijana	Goat and Pig Rearing	240,000.00	60,000.00	300,000.00
Bardiya	Motipur	Ekata Samaj	Commercial Nursery Management	240,000.00	300,700.00	540,700.00
	Mainapokhar	Bhadohi Mahila	Pig Rearing	240,000.00	227,000.00	467,000.00
	Neulapur	Kopila	Leaf plate making	240,000.00	120,000.00	360,000.00

	Bagnaha	Jharsaluwa	Goat and Pig Rearing	240,000.00	1,160,000.00	1,400,000.00
	Dhodhari	Kotahi Mahila	Commercial Nursery Management	240,000.00	132,950.00	372,950.00
Kailali	Beladevipur (Attariya Municipality)	Sita Ram	Poultry Farming	240,000.00	135,000.00	375,000.00
	Sripur (Attariya Municipality)	Suryodaya	Vegetable and poultry farming	240,000.00	80,475.00	320,475.00
	Ratanpur	Shivshakti	Goat and Pig Rearing	240,000.00	141,200.00	381,200.00
	Hasuliya	Kamalpokhari	Bamboo Furniture	240,000.00	105,405.00	345,405.00
	Geta (Attariya Municipality)	Sahidsanghari Bhimdatta Pant	Vegetable Farming	240,000.00	81,200.00	321,200.00
Banke	Kohalpur	Miteri	Goat Rearing	240,000.00	86,000.00	326,000.00
	Rajhena	Jana Ekata Mahila Maddhewarti	Goat Rearing	240,000.00	72,500.00	312,500.00
	Manikapur	Jaya Saraswoti	Nursery management	240,000.00	79,900.00	319,900
	Naubasta	Sungava	Pig Rearing	240,000.00	85,251.00	325,251.00
	Hirminiya	Hajrat	Nursery management	240,000.00	86,500.00	326,500.00

Annex IV: Natural Resource Management Initiatives:

District	VDC	CFUG Name	Name of the NRM Initiatives	Budget Estimated		
				Requested from MC-N	Community Contribution in cash/kind	Total Budget
Dang	Pawananager	Viedahar Sonpur	Barbed wire fencing	48,000.00	78,000.00	126,000.00
	Purandhara	Devidanda	Trench digging	48,000.00	98,000.00	146,000.00
	Panchakule	Satpokhari Hurum	Plantation	48,000.00	78,000.00	126,000.00
	Halwar	Jarayotakuri	Barbed wire fencing	48,000.00	78,000.00	126,000.00
	Shantinager	Srijana	Barbed wire fencing	48,000.00	78,000.00	126,000.00
Bardiya	Motipur	Ekata Samaj	Trench digging	48,000.00	260,000.00	308,000.00
	Mainapokhar	Bhadohi Mahila	Trench digging	48,000.00	412,000.00	460,000.00
	Neulapur	Kopila	Bio check dam	48,000.00	417,000.00	465,000.00
	Bagnaha	Jharsaluwa	Bio check dam	48,000.00	187,000.00	235,000.00
	Dhodhari	Kotahi Mahila	Bel conservation	48,000.00	31,000.00	79,000.00
Kailali	Beladevipur (Attariya Municipality)	Sita Ram	Barbed wire fencing	48,000.00	50,000.00	98,000.00

Banke	Sripur (Attariya Municipality)	Suryodaya	Barbed wire fencing	48,000.00	42,500.00	90,500.00
	Ratanpur	Shivshakti	Plantation and Trench digging	48,000.00	31,000.00	79,000.00
	Hasuliya	Kamalpokhari	Nursery Production and plantation	48,000.00	44,930.00	92,930.00
	Geta (Attariya Municipality)	Sahidsanghari Bhimdatta Pant	Bioengineering	48,000.00	482,000.00	530,000.00
	Kohalpur	Miteri	Barbed wire fencing	48,000.00	65,000.00	113,000.00
	Rajhena	Jana Ekata Mahila Maddhewarti	Barbed wire fencing	48,000.00	70,100.00	118,100.00
	Manikapur	Jaya Saraswoti	Barbed wire fencing	48,000.00	47,440.00	95,440.00
	Naubasta	Sungava	Trench digging	48,000.00	27,000.00	75,000.00
	Hajrat	Hajrat	Barbed wire fencing	48,000.00	29,000.00	77,000.00

Annex V: CFUG Governance and Management Training

S. N	Name of Participant	Organization	Designation	Address	Gender	Age	Caste/ethnicity	Disability
1.	Renuka Chaudhary	BASE	Social Mobilization	Dang	Female	31	Janajati (Terai)	NA
2.	Tak Bdr. Chaudhary	BASE	Social Mobilization	Dang	Male	44	Janajati (Terai)	NA
3.	Ruplal Chaudhary	BASE	Secretary	Dang	Male	43	Janajati (Terai)	NA
4.	Narendra Chaudhary	BASE	SM	Kailali	Male	28	Janajati (Terai)	NA
5.	Ram Pd. Chaudhary	BASE	Secretary	Kailali	Male	32	Janajati (Terai)	NA
6.	Jagadish Pd. Chaudhary	BASE	Social Mobilization	Kailali	Male	32	Janajati (Terai)	NA

7.	Rama Chaudhary	BASE	Social Mobilization	Bardiya	Female	23	Janajati (Terai)	NA
8.	Laxmi Bhandari	BASE	Social Mobilization	Bardiya	Female	27	Brahmin (Hill)	NA
9.	Janak Dulari Chaudhary	BASE	Secretary	Bardiya	Female	34	Janajati (Terai)	NA
10.	Hemraj Bhatta	SS	Community Facilitator	Banke	Male	28	Brahmin (Hill)	NA
11.	Manbir Nepali	SS	Team Leader	Banke	Male	41	Dalit (Hill)	NA
12.	Gita Budha	SS	Community Facilitator	Banke	Female	24	Chhetri (Hill)	NA
13.	Binita Chaudhary	SS	Community Facilitator	Banke	Female	23	Janajati (Terai)	NA
14.	Partima Rana	SS	Community Facilitator	Banke	Female	39	Janajati (Hill)	NA
15.	Tank Bdr. Pun	SS	Community Facilitator	Banke	Male	27	Janajati (Hill)	NA

Annex VI: Beneficiary list for Environmentally Sustainable Economic Initiatives

District	VDC / Municipality	CFUG Name	Initiative Name	Direct beneficiaries (I-Lot)				Well-being status
				H H	Male	Female	Total	
Dang	Pawananager	Viedahar Sonpur	Goat and Pig Rearing	33	90	100	190	Ultra poor
	Purandhara	Devidanda	Goat Rearing	39	91	116	207	Ultra poor
	Panchakule	Satpokhari Hurum	Goat Rearing	10	27	33	60	Ultra poor
	Halwar	Jarayotakuri	Goat Rearing and Mushroom product	28	77	75	152	Ultra poor
	Shantinager	Srijana	Goat and Pig Rearing	35	52	44	96	Ultra poor
Bardiya	Motipur	Ekata Samaj	Commercial Nursery Management	1	1	1	2	Ultra poor
	Mainapokhar	Bhadohi Mahila	Pig Rearing	2	5	7	12	Ultra poor
	Neulapur	Kopila	Duna Tapari (leaf	2	9	6	15	Ultra poor

			plate)					
	Bagnaha	Jharsaluwa	Goat and Pig Rearing	80	130	129	259	Ultra poor
	Dhodhari	Kotahi Mahila	Commercial Nursery Management	1	1	3	4	Ultra poor
Kailali	Beladevipur (Attariya Municipality)	Sita Ram	Poultry Farming					Yet to finalize
	Sripur (Attariya Municipality)	Suryodaya	Vegetable farming and Broiler Chicken farming	5	19	24	43	Poor
	Ratanpur	Shivshakti	Goat and Pig Rearing	25	125	100	225	Medium: 16 HH and poor: 9 HH
	Hasuliya	Kamalpokhari	Bamboo Furniture	7	30	30	60	Poor
	Geta (Attariya Municipality)	Sahidsanghari Bhimdatta Pant	Vegetable Farming	6	19	21	40	Ultra poor: 3 HH and poor: 3 HH
Banke	Naubasta	Sungava	Pig Rearing	57	140	180	320	Poor and ultra poor
	Rajhena	Jana Ekata Mahila	Goat Rearing	28	80	77	157	Poor
	Kohalpur	Miteri	Goat Rearing	40	140	84	224	Poor
	Manikapur	Jaya Saraswoti	Commercial Nursery Management	30	88	80	168	Poor
	Hirminiya	Hajrat	Commercial Nursery Management	91	317	192	509	Poor

Annex VII: Beneficiary list for Natural Resource Management Initiatives

District	VDC / Municipality	CFUG Name	Initiative Name	Beneficiaries			
				HH	Male	Female	Total
Dang	Pawananager	Viedahar Sonpur	Barbed wire fencing	654	1,675	1,590	3,265
	Purandhara	Devidanda	Trench digging	170	530	518	1,048

	Panchakule	Satpokhari Hurum	Plantation	412	1,316	1,226	2,542
	Halwar	Jarayotakuri	Barbed wire fencing	150	432	392	824
	Shantinager	Srijana	Barbed wire fencing	236	612	566	1,178
Bardiya	Motipur	Ekata Samaj	Trench digging	350	165	185	350
	Mainapokhar	Bhadohi Mahila	Trench digging	309	159	150	309
	Neulapur	Kopila	Bio checkdam	180	25	155	180
	Bagnaha	Jharsaluwa	Bio checkdam	225	65	160	225
	Dhodhari	Kotahi Mahila	Bel conservation	355	185	170	355
Kailali	Beladevipur (Attariya Municipality)	Sita Ram	Barbed wire fencing	168	664	572	1,236
	Sripur (Attariya Municipality)	Suryodaya	Barbed wire Barbed wire fencing	383	1,312	1,289	2,601
	Ratanpur	Shivshakti	Plantation and Trench digging	73	220	210	430
	Hasuliya	Kamalpokhari	Nursery Production and plantation	144	587	613	1,200
	Geta (Attariya Municipality)	Sahidsanghari Bhimdatta Pant	Bio- engineering (on the process of proposal development)	305	1,037	1,003	2,040
Banke	Naubasta	Sungava	Trench digging	722	1,981	2,062	4,043
	Rajhena	Jana Ekata Mahila	Barbed wire fencing	2,025	5,710	5,629	11,339
	Kohalpur	Miteri	Barbed wire fencing	292	796	838	1,634
	Manikapur	Jaya Saraswoti	Barbed wire fencing	411	1,187	1,113	2,300
	Hirminiya	Hajrat	Barbed wire fencing	551	1,501	1,586	3,087

Annex VIII: Success Stories

Encroachers turned into conservers

Devidada Community Forest Group (CFUG) established in 1998 comes under Purandhara VDC of Dang district. It has 550 hectares of land, comprising 170 households with a population of 1,048 (530 male and 518 female).

For eight years, seven user households encroached on seven hectares of barren forestland adjoining their personal land. There was a sense of impunity and this caused conflict among the users and executive committee. For years, the VDC office and DFO tried many times to get both parties together and settle the dispute, but they could not. The key stakeholders received five days of community mediation training to mitigate this sort of NRM-based conflicts. The meeting of executive committee then decided to forward the case to the Natural Resource Management Forum (NRMF) for mitigation on 18th May 2014.

After the case registration, the trained key stakeholders informed other parties to the conflict to participate in the mediation session on 18th July 2014. Both parties selected facilitators from their side. According to the plan, both parties arrived to the safe place for the mediation session, including three trained mediators: Mr. Yam Lal Bhandari (*also a staff of the Area Forest Office*), Ms. Shova Khadka, and Mr. Tank Raj BK. After a rigorous story sharing, interactions and exercises, the mediators reached the heart of the dispute, that land was being encroached upon due



to lax internal governance and oversight and the feeling by some that forest resources were being shared inequitably. Finally, the executive committee members told the encroachers that they could plant fodder trees on that encroached upon land. Those fodder trees would later be utilized for the goat rearing economic initiative of the IRMI program. After a daylong session, the encroachers agreed to leave the encroached land and plant fodder plant species together with their already planted maize crop. After a few days, all CFUG members, including encroachers, planted those species on the encroached upon seven hectares of land. This has helped other users realize not to encroach on community forestland. This effort contributed towards maintaining a clean and green environment, abundant grasses for users and it maintains better, more productive relations within users group.

As a part of the IRMI program, the Devidada CFUG submitted a proposal of goat rearing as an environmentally sustainable economic initiatives and 'trench digging in the CFUG boundary' as a joint natural resource management initiative. The previous encroachers are also becoming a part of this income generation scheme, bringing those ostensibly seen as the instigators of conflict into a

mutually beneficial solution to that conflict. The CFUG membership now sees the inclusion of all parties as being far more longer-term beneficial and sustainable than continued exclusion.

Opponents became coworkers

Mr. Abdul Sheikh (56 yrs) is a former chairperson of the Hajrat CFUG, Hirminiya VDC. He is also an active social worker. When elections were held to form the executive committee of this CFUG in 2009, he and his nephew, Mr. Maruf Sheikh, competed for the post of chairperson. Mr. Maruf Sheikh was elected chairperson, leading with 16 votes. At that point, Mr. Abdul Sheikh started blaming the election board and his nephew, claiming the election had not been fair. After the election, they did not speak to each other for six years, even though they are close relatives. This interpersonal dispute impacted not only on their personal relationship, but also on the family relationships and the CFUG activities.

Figure 11: Mr. Abdul Sheikh, former chairperson of Hajrat CFUG



After implementation of the IRMI program got underway in their CFUG, Mr. Abdul Sheikh was also fortunately selected as a key stakeholder and received interest-based community mediation training, resource-based community mediation and dialogue skills development training. In addition, he was able to take part in each IRMI activity. After receiving the training, he realized that, *"Now, I am a peace facilitator and reconciliation should start with me. I should establish communication with Maruf again."* He went straight to Mr. Maruf Sheikh (present chairperson of the Hajrat CFUG) and said, *"You are my nephew and both of us are working for our community development endeavors, so why don't we work together?"* Maruf also liked his proposal and decided to patch up their differences and start cooperating as relatives and CFUG fellow members. Now they are working together on forest related matters, facilitating conflicts and other community developments. Both of them are good peace facilitators in their communities and have resolved several disputes jointly. The relationship between their family members has also been reestablished and they now participate in social gatherings together. Abdul happily said, *"The trainings I received made me a real social worker. The whole credit goes to IRMI."*