



COMMUNITY-BASED FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN BHAKTAPUR DISTRICT

(A REPORT)



Organized by
District Forest Office, Bhaktapur

Supported by:
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&
Nepal Forest Fire Management Chapter (NFMC)

Bhaktapur, 29 – 30 March 2010

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COMMUNITY-BASED FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN BHAKTAPUR DISTRICT

1. Introduction

There is increasing incidences and vulnerabilities of forest fires imposing serious threats to lives and properties, destruction and degradation of valuable forests in Nepal every year. Uncontrolled forest fires in 2009 fire season alone toll to 43 death of people (including Army personnel, community fire fighters and general public) and destroying hundreds of thousands of hectares of national forests particularly to community forests, government managed forests, national parks and reserves. There is lack of local and national capability to deal with forest fires.

Community Forests in Bhaktapur district are also vulnerable to uncontrolled forest fire every year. Awareness and capability of the local community need to be develop to deal with the forest fires.

The training course is aimed at villagers and other members of a Community Forest User's Group (CFUG) and will allow to let people develop their own fire management plan and fire risk map. It deals with tools for community based fire management planning that are intended for use in a process which is as participatory as possible. It has been developed so that it can be applied to any village environment in Nepal.

2. Objectives:

The main aim of the training course was to demonstrate the community-based fire management (CBFiM) in the context of the country environment by developing management capability of local people.

Objectives of the training:

- To create awareness on forest fire prevention and control
- To contribute in preparing a community based fire management plan
- To practice use of the fire fighting techniques and tools

The training course, *inter alia*, took into account of safety and ergonomic aspects in fire management, including uses of appropriate fire fighting tools, prescribed fire for ecological purposes and fuel management, gender-balanced representation.

3. Course Development

The training course is developed in such a way that the participants can learn in a participatory way. There is less lectures and more practices in the field, group works and discussions. Modifications in the contents has made as per the participants' requirements and the level of learning during the training course. So, the course contents may need to be tailored according to the local situation in future training programme.

Major topics covered in the training course are as follows:

1. Participants' experiences on past fires in their area
2. Fire situation assessment
3. Participatory resource mapping
4. Action planning
5. Fire prevention and suppression
6. Fire behaviour and prescribed burning
7. Fire safety

4. Programme Implementation

The beauty of the training programme was the participatory way of needs and situations assessment together with community people. It was further assessed during the presentation of the participant's reports and resource mapping.

Box 1: An overview of the training course

Course Coordinator: Ms. S. Shrestha

External Resource Persons: Mr. Sundar P. Sharma
Mr. Kiran Timilsena

Duration: 29 -30 March 2010

Target Group: Members of Community
Forest User Groups
(Bhaktapur)

The training programme was formally opened by the Chief Guest **Ms. Prava Pande** Local Development Officer, District Development Committee, Bhaktapur by watering the plant and Chaired by Ms. Santa Maya Shrestha, DFO, Bhaktapur.

The training programme is stipulated in *Annex I*.

Lists of the trainees is given in *Annex II*.



Opening Ceremony



Lecturing

General characteristics of the tools applied in this training course include the following:

- it aims to include the perspectives of all interest groups, including rural women and men (gender balance)
- it recognizes indigenous technical knowledge on fire management (and that this knowledge is gender based)

The basic moods of the training were:

- lectures on basic fire management
- exercises on the use of controlled fire and fire fighting handtools
- field visit to show villagers the effects of fire breaks
- field visit to show villagers the behavior of fire
- reflections from the past

5. The outcomes:

- Capacity development

Twenty-three (>50% women) Trainees (see the list in *Annex IV*) were trained and aware of the impacts of the forest fire and show willingness to disseminate the knowledge and skills gained from the training to the local community and to other users groups as well.



Trained CFUG members

- Participatory resource map (PRM)

Through the PRM, outsiders gain insights into how rural women and men perceive their resources and select their priorities for managing fires.

Villagers can present and analyse information on land use, watersheds and forests and other resources related to fire management through participatory mapping process.

- Fire risk reduction map (FREM)

It includes:

- Removal of hazards from high risk areas.
- Initiate fuel breaking belts through removing fuels.



Participatory resource map (PRM)
prepared by the local people

- Awareness raising

It has created awareness among general public and among policy makers regarding wildland fire and its impacts. The programme was well covered by the media.



News Published in Kantipur Daily in 31 March 2010 highlighting the controlled burning

6. Conclusions and Recommendation

Fire fighter safety should be the prime consideration.

Group works and presentation, discussion and practical should be a major part of the participatory teaching and learning processes.

Fire fighting tools and equipments need to be arranged in all CFUGs.

It is recommended that the follow-up of the outcomes of the training is necessary.

Annex I: COMMUNITY-BASED FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN BHAKTAPUR DISTRICT

Objectives of the Training

1. To create awareness on forest fire prevention and control
2. To contribute in preparing a community based fire management plan
3. To practice use of the fire fighting techniques and tools

Venue: DFO, Bhaktapur

Date: 29 - 30 March 2010

Date	Day	Time	Topics (Session)	Method	Organization
29-March	Tuesday	10.00-10.30	Registration	Participatory	All
		10.30-12.30	Opening Ceremony		CFUG/DFO/NFMC
		<i>12.30-13.30</i>	<i>Refreshment</i>		
		13.30-14.30	Introductory Briefing on Logistic Support, Course Content Objective and Aim of the Course	Lecture	NFMC
		14.30-15.30	Participants' Experience on Forest Fire	Discussion	DFO
		15.30-15.45	Break		
		15.45-17.00	Fire Safety, Fire Behaviour, Fire Suppression Tactics, Techniques and Tools	Lecture and GD	DFO
30-March	Wednesday	10.00-1100	Resource Mapping and Fire Risk Zoning Map Preparation	Group work	CFUG / NFMC
		11.00- 13.00	Fire Safety, Fire Behaviour, Fire Suppression Tactics, Techniques and Tools	Lecture and GD	DFO
			Planning for Burning Practice	GD	NFMC
		<i>13.00-13.300</i>	<i>Tea break</i>		
		<i>14.00-16.00</i>	Burning Practices	Field Practice	NFMC
		16.00- 17.00	Reflection of the Field Practice	Participatory	NFMC

Note: CFUG = Community Forest Users Group; DFO = District Forest Office; NFMC = Nepal Forest Fire Management Chapter

Annex II: Lists of the trainees

S.N.	Name	Adress
1	Mr. Pancha lal Rajbahak	Madhyapur Thimi - 3
2	Mr. Binod Neupane	Dadhikot
3	Ms. Geeta Neupane	Palleban Dadhikot
4	Ms. Malati Karki	Likha Narayan
5	Ms. Anati Basnet	Bal Kumari CFUG
6	Ms. Mira Wagle	Gundu – 3
7	Ms. Maya Tamang	Nagarkot, Yen CFUG
8	Ms. Sanu Maya Tamang	Nagarkot, Kusum CFUG
9	Ms. Ganga Thapa	Taleju CFUG
10	Ms. Parbati Panta	Ranikot – 4
11	Mr. Suvash Gajurel	Patle CFUG
12	Mr. Pravin Sapkota	Hariyali CFUG
13	Mr. Lok Nath Sapkota	Hariyali CFUG
14	Ms. Meena Khadka	Bir Singhe CFUG
15	Ms. Ambika Neupane	Chameli CFUG
16	Ms. Rijana Khatri	Shree Bahal CFUG
17	Ms. Sushila Adhikari	Shree Bahal CFUG
18	Mr. Matakhu Khadka	Unnat Lingeshor CFUG
19	Mr. Jaya Ram Neupane	Nagarkot
20	Mr. Bishnu Thapa	Nagarkot
21	Mr. Ramashor Lamichhane	Pahal Ban CFUG
22	Mr. Santosh Shrestha	Dakshin Barahi
23	Ms. Januka Karki	Surya Mod Perunge