

A 65 years old Nepalese manages a model farm!

Forest is a significant source of income for families in Nepal

The family forest

The family forest of the 65 year old Mr. Laxmi Bahadur Khadka gives work to 10 family members. So the benefit gained from the working forest sustainably secures the livelihood for 6 female and 4 male family members. Mr. Khadka is a resident of the town Khaskusma VDC in the Banke District located in the south-western part of Nepal.

Despite his age, he is active and manages his family forest farm which spreads over 3.6 ha. Over 10000 saplings of Malesian Sal (*Dysoxylum Costulatum*), Masala, Tik (*Tectonagrandis*) and bakaino (*Meliaazedarach*) form the major tree composition of this forest.

Challenges in a working forest

Despite government agencies including other administrative stakeholders recognize Mr. Khadka's work as an exemplary forest farmer still some major challenges remain to be dealt with by Mr. Khadka:

- receiving permission by the government for cutting and selling the tress
- lack of support by the government for protecting the forest
- Ban on trade and transport of different tree species from private forest
- Plant saplings being expensive
- Unavailability of irrigation facilities
- Absence of technical knowledge in the family forest farmers



Photo: visitors at Mr. Khadka's farmland

Recently, his farm was visited by several family forest farmers of the region who are planning to maintain their forest farms as an additional source of income.

The role of the local forest association

Mr. Khadka is convinced that his farming operation can only be successful together with other forest famers. He is one of the first members of the newly established Association of Family forest Owner Nepal (AFFON member). There is good market for wood but due to the policy hurdles family forest owners are unable to sell them in the market. AFFON has begun to advocate the forest farmers in terms of lobbying with the government agencies and other stakeholders to enable forest farming in Nepal as an additional source of income.

If family forest farmers were allowed to trade timber from their farm lands, not only their economy would boost but also contribute to the GDP of the country. Furthermore, other farmers would also be motivated to practice family forestry not just to protect the trees and meet their household need but also to generate income, a path towards prosperity.



Photo: AFFON chairperson, Mr. Jog Raj Giri, during his vist to Mr. Khadka's farmland

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