Synopsis and Lessons from a day District Level Stakeholders Workshop on "Opportunities and Challenges embedded within Community Forestry" 15th September 2010

Prepared by: Dr Kalpana Giri Dr. Dharma Raj Uperty Mr. Rajesh Bista

RPISF-RIU 19th September 2010
Synopsis:

- Limited understanding of fostering economic innovation exists in forestry sector.
- Context-specific and not linear regulations are required to address and respond to the diversity of CFUGs across Nepal. Existing trend of one rule for all CFUGs irrespective of context and culture can create further conflict, and harm the good will of community towards community forestry itself and thus, to forest conservation.
- Joint collaboration of state and non-state actors, are reported to be perceived more trustworthy and accountable by the CFUG members.
- Participatory process, that are reiterative and involve several deliberative platforms at different levels can challenge the status quo and lead to process-rich outcomes within and outside CFUGs.
- Process rich outcomes (and not only mere outcomes) are of urgent need for fostering innovations in Nepal’s forestry sector.
- Department of Forest has started communicating with several CFUG to stop already initiated activities, due to newly made changes suggested in ForestAct 1991. FECOFUN has been advocating to retain community rights, while CFUGs are confused, angry and do not know how to meddle in with new rules and scenarios.

Context:

A one day workshop “Opportunities and Challenges embedded within Community Forestry” was organized by District FECOFUN, Lalitpur, in collaboration with the other four RPISF-RIU collaborators to capture and share reflection from stakeholders from district level on 15th September, 2010. While the workshop is a part of RIU regular activities i.e. district stakeholder interaction, this is the first of its RPISF-RIU event that District FECOFUN organized after its general assembly (give month and year) and new elected leadership.

A total of 57 participants took part in the workshop representing various organizations such as District Agriculture Office, NGO Federation- Lalitpur, District Forest Office-Lalitpur, HIMAWANTI-Lalitpur, Range Post Offices-Lalitpur, three major political parties-Nepali Congress, Nepal Communist Party Maoist (United), Nepal Communist Party UML and media persons. Detail of the participants and program are provided respectively in Annex1 and Annex 2.
**Program Synopsis:**

Honorable parliamentary member Mrs. Janak Kumari Chalise formally inaugurated the program by watering on *Aloe Vera* plant. A women FECOFUN member of Lalitpur moderated the session.

Dr. Dharam Raj Uprety- project coordinator and Dr. Kalpana Giri, Research and Documentation Specialist of RPISF-RIU jointly talked about RPISF-RIU objectives, current status of progress, and achievements and challenges of innovation system approach. They expressed the opportunity that innovation system approach involves to reiterative learning process of all the involved parties such as Forest Action, CFUG members, Coalition partners etc. Such reiterative learning process while has established the social learning process in several CFUG, the challenge still lies on how such processes of social learning can be used to reduce poverty, viz. such as by entrepreneurship development. They both stressed the potential of the workshop to bring in different perspectives and reach to common solutions. (For detail, see Annex 3)

Likewise Training and workshop Specialist of RPISF-RIU, Mr. Kamal Bhandari and Ranger from Area Range Post, Lamatar Mr. Santaram Baral presented their experiences and lessons of CFUGs’ constitution making process. Making use of Participatory Action and Learning Approach (for details, see REF.), they have stressed to follow proper reiterative and participatory processes to reach to outcomes such as Constitution of CFUG. Such process led outcomes involve several deliberative platforms to challenge the current status quo and to have unified visioning of outcomes. As an example, when the facilitators inquired about putting women’s name as the household head, there was uproar in the community men against it. Later, during the discussion, the community men identified the role women play in forest conservation, and thus the credit to women in forest constitution, they agreed. Also, communities were earlier hesitant about undertaking well-being ranking for they thought that they do not necessarily want to be labeled as rich and poor (in fact, there have been fights before whenever attempts to such well-being ranking was made). When communities discussed and realized the differences in consumption pattern of rich and poor, they also undertook well-being ranking. Local people themselves crafted indicators and assigned households to particular ranks (rich, medium and poor). While the challenges of participatory exclusion of women and lower caste are still valid, the experience with constitution making process indicates that participatory process that are reiterative and involve several deliberative platforms at different levels can challenge the status quo and lead
to process-rich outcomes. Such process rich outcomes (and not only mere outcomes) are of urgent need for fostering innovations in Nepal’s forestry sector. (For detail, see annex 3).

While speaking about major lessons learned during time spent in CFUG’s constitution making process, Ranger of Department of Forest, Mr Baral has indicated that local people still hesitate to go to District Forest Office, for some kind of fear or distantiation and even if Department of Forest alone facilitates any programs for local people, local people are afraid to attend. However, if the program is jointly organized with civil society like ForestAction or any other collaborators, people feel secure and participate and often claim ownership on the program. (For details, see the paper presented (in Nepali) in Annex 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions and Comments raised on presentation:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Did the CF obtain all the objectives which they have committed during its hand over? Research should also cover these aspects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Research finding form one CF might not be applicable for another CF, due to the complexity of resources, communities, and topographical features within a CF.</td>
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<td>• How much technical and economical input was required to prepare the model Constitution of CF?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Government has lots of resources but there was lacking of proper planning and immobilization. So needs to derive clear process, guidelines and approach of these innovation practices to support government activities.</td>
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After the presentation, guest puts there speech on behalf of this one day interaction workshop. Chief Guest Ms. Janak Kumari Chalise said, rights of the communities on forest should not be curtailed, but need to reform governance to end the irregularities in Community Forestry. She has also highlighted the activities of parliamentary members under the "Natural Resource thematic group" (Prakirtik Shrowt Bebastapan Samiti). She also emphasized the monitoring campaign on deforestation issue by 7 sub group of parliamentary members in 27 districts of Terai. She expressed that though there is uncertainty about country constitutions drafting process, however the task of preparing Forestry and Environment Sector policies and plan is going smoothly and the new Forest Sector policy will be justifiable for all citizens of Nepal and overall focus to develop 40% of total area as a forest cover. She committed that both the perspective of civil society and Government will be taken into consideration in the new forestry sector polices. Some issues like political instability and deforestation, corruption in forestry sector, resource use right of CF need political commitment and interest, needs of NR conservation for future generations Likewise, issues of forest act amendment, reward and punishment to contributors and
offender was also put forward. Lastly, she concluded her speech with "Forestry is not Green showpiece but need to be well-utilized with proper benefits going to the poorest section" and she also emphasized the needs of common consensus and coordination between political party to develop and manage forest area.

During the program, FECOFUN, Lalitpur read the synopsis letter of correspondence which was forwarded form state to different DFO offices and ultimately to the CFUGs, to implement new rules and regulations. In there letter, the state claim the deforestation and degradation in some places of Terai forest by the involvement of forest brokers hasten the government bodies to amend the policies (to keep CF under government control), as they require second thoughts, which is also not scientific and also injustice to those FUGs who were actively participating in the conservation and management of community forest since some decades. In that letter of correspondence, some issues of banning in traditional use rights, restriction on customary practices and cultural values has been raised. Voices raised from community level were seeking the ways to practices their traditional rights of graveyard in existing places. Social services like construction of shed house near to graveyard, roads construction and other development activities; like tourism development, recreation sites development, reformation of well manage picnic spot was also banned without due consideration of any socio-cultural and economic factors. Community puts their voices that, steps towards socio-economic development through these kinds of initiation was environment and forest friendly and just a well and managed form of practices, which have been carried out previously Although, there is restriction in newly amended policies regarding these practices, these kinds of amended acts can brings mistrust towards community on Government Organization and lose the motivation to conserve forest and to initiate the transformation process of society. After the long and continuous commitment of users group for forest conservation, they bring green revolution in the barren and marginal sites. From all these things we can learn a lesson that: One rule for all CFUGs irrespective of context and culture can create further conflict, and harm the good will of community towards community forestry itself. A copy of that correspondence letter is provided in Annex 3:

FECOFUN President Ms. Apasara Chapagain talked about the history of FECOFUN, the context of the FECOFUN evolution, its achievement, women participation, governance issues, and the role of CF as research laboratory for national and international researchers, voluntary contribution of more than 20 thousand fellows to CFs. On the behalf of needs of Decentralization of FECOFUN towards rural areas, she also committed to launch rural CF
focused program. She has also strongly raised the voice to protest against the issue forest act amendment.

The District Forest Officer from Lalitpur stressed on the need of different management regime to come in the national and international discussion, and it would be narrow mind if we just talk about community forestry alone. He also puts his voice like; "earlier there was great economic support form DANIDA, due to which DFO can conduct and focus CF program but now we have economic constrains, during the preparation of Master Plan for Forestry Sector also government didn't recognized the Terai Forest as separate entity and develop the same policies and plan to both of the forest of Hills and Terai. So, we need to amend and review some existing policies. In media and public hearing also must of them focus the forest act amendment form CF perspective only and in fact there are lots of amended which was so beneficial to local forest users groups. Beside this, in present context some of CF was so large in area with proportional to user group due to which some incidence of corruption and illegal felling was manifested. He also stressed on the need of training and awareness to forest users, ways of plan and program development in forestry sectors, needs a site based policies for forestry sector. Forest hand over to the community should be on scientific basis due to which the objectives of handover forest can be achieved.

Likewise, other guests form NGO Federation- Lalitpur, District Forest Office-Lalitpur, HIMAWANTI-Lalitpur, Range Post Offices-Lalitpur, three major political parties-Nepali Congress, Nepal Communist Party Maoist (United), Nepal Communist Party UML arose the issues of community rights on natural resources, cultural and social rights on CF, roles and responsibilities of DFO, needs of coordination and cooperation among different organizations, regular interaction among concerned stakeholder, forest encroachment in CF, scaling up the innovative system, direct involvement of stakeholder in forest act amendment, issues of governance in CF, needs of disseminate and scale out innovative products and processes, needs of multi stakeholders involvement in CF development, needs of political commitment from all political parties, needs of interactions and idea exchanges among diverse actors, strengthening the approach of DFOs resources and towards the management and sustainable development of Natural resources.

At last, president of FEOFUN, Lalitpur puts vote of thank to all the participants. He committed to decentralize the activities of FECOFUN, Lalitpur in rural area as well.

Annex 1: List of participants in District Level Stakeholder Interaction Workshop

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<tr>
<th>S. N</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Nagendra Lamsal</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>NFEJ Media Linkage Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kamal Bhandari</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Forest Action Training / Advocacy Officer</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Bimala Ghimiri</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>HIMAWANTI Chairperson</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kamala Acharya</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Women CF, Jharuasi</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pramila Wagle</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Horticulture Dept. Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rajesh Bista</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Chhetri</td>
<td>Forest Action Know. Mgmt Officer</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Dr. Dharma Raj Uperty</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Forest Action Project Coordinator</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Laxman Ghimiri</td>
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<td>Forest Action Statistician</td>
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<td>Santa Ram Baral</td>
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<td>Thakur Pd. Subedi</td>
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<td>Bishakhu Narayan RP Ranger</td>
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<td>Bhupendra Magar</td>
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Annex 2: Detail of program:
Annex 3: Paper presented by Dr. Dharma Uperty and Dr. Kalpani Giri

RPISIF - Action and learning model

- **RPISIF focus**: Community forestry program, principles, functions, and structure
  - Tenure of resources: Community based, joint efforts and benefits
80% people - heavily dependent on agriculture and forestry.
- 15,000 CF user groups (CFUG) in Nepal, 1.5 mha (21%) as CF, 3.5 mha still potential for community-based forest management.

<table>
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<th>Districts</th>
<th>Total CF</th>
<th>Total HH</th>
<th>Total Users</th>
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<td>Lalitpur</td>
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<td>Nawalparasi</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
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**RPISF Objective and process**

**Output 1: Forest management**
Forest management innovation and use by CFUGs for income generation.

**Output 2: Group governance**
Governance innovations and use (visioning, hamlet-based planning and decision-making, and self-monitoring).

**Output 3: Enterprise development**
Adoption of planning and self-monitoring processes in enterprise development and marketing of forest products and services by CFUGs

**Output 4: Stakeholders and collaborations**
They take part in collaborative modes to planning & implementation.

**Output 5: Innovation systems support**
Linking lessons and plans with multiple actors at local and national level.

परियोजनाको उद्देश्यहरू

1. दिगो बन व्यवस्थापन
2. समूहमित्रको सुशासन
3. बन संगठनाला आयोजित उद्यमको विकास
4. संस्कारास्थान शीर्ष समाचार तथा सामाजिक
5. सिंचालनात्मक पहिचिको व्यवस्थापनको सहयोग (संगठन केन्द्रको स्थापना, संचार तथा संज्ञाल निर्माण तथा
   नीतिमा प्रतिक्रिया सहयोग)

**Innovation system approach in Community Forestry**
Innovation system approach in Community Forestry

**Community Based Resources Center**
- Information collection
- Dissemination

**Community Radio program**
- Raise poor people’s voice to meso-level policy makers
- Disseminate best practices of CFUGs to wider audience

**Knowledge management and documentation**
- Sharing workshop at different level e.g. cluster, district National and international level
- Discussion papers, quarterly report, Annual report

**Process innovation for generating lessons**

- Identification of key species for enterprise through value chain analysis
- Enterprise establishment
- Plantation movement
- Silvicultural practices
- Among CFUGs
- CFUGs with concerned stakeholders
- Hamlet based sub-committees
- Thematic committees
Quantified inputs & outreach

45 Forest management and governance trainings, involving 1751 people, 30% Janjati, 13% Dalits – a total of 56% women, 40% poor

303 Tole meetings, involving 7007 people, 28% Janjati, 29% Dalits – a total of 57% women, 40% poor
52 cluster level meetings, involving 1345 people, 27% Janjati, 7% Dalit - a total of 34% women, 15% poor

Total involvement of 10103 people including trainings/workshops, cluster meetings, tole meetings, 28% Janjati, 23% Dalit - a total of 54% women, 15% poor
Total number of direct reach in all our activities: 10103

Research into Use – An innovative approach for community mobilization and national policy dev.

- Research through interaction, validation and use
Use – Revisit research process, outcomes, lessons, challenges
- Locals communities and stakeholders revisit their programs, processes with new proposals
- Better understanding of lessons and challenges
- Ownership, accountability and seeking for sustainable ideas and actions
- Emphasis on holistic development, not only to project objectives or period.

Continuing challenges
- Lack of policy for enterprise development
- Lack of enterprise models in publicly owned resource
- Resource based complexities (Terai vs Hill)
- Community material incentives- community perception on development project
- Participatory exclusion: numbers vs. process oriented outcomes, benefitting them
- Caste, gender and cultural complexities despite some innovations
- Political instability and confusion- unsettling & transitional

A paper presented by: Kamal Bhandari(Forest Action) and Santa Ram Baral(Sisneri Rangepost)
Eco Tourism स्मृति गठन र काय संचालन

पुरानो समाधि र नवो समाधि बीमा छ। मैले गरेको काम गर्ने भएने भावना छ। वधान र कार्ययोजनामा प्रतिविधिहरूको वर्तमा उपभोक्ताहरूको कमजोरी भएको। सामार्थ्यक वन श्रेष्ठ एक अर्को समह बीचमा गोताको चारी रामको बडेको छ। समुहको धेरै सदस्यहरू साँभव वर्षाको पिन र काटु दुईभन्दा भएको सोच। सामार्थ्यक वनहरू वर्षाको बर्बाद बन्ने बटाल बन्ने पाइछ। कल्याण समुहहरू कोर्टको अतिरिक्तको कारण सदस्यहरूको निर्णय छाएको छ। देश वैद्यवादको विभवरता भन्दा वैद्यवाद वर्षाको दिन पछ्छ भएको भुकाइ रहेको छ। प्राप्त समुहहरू उपभोक्ताहरूको सम्बन्ध र स्तरीकरण नगरितको। धेरै उपभोक्ताहरू सामार्थ्यक वन भनेको समाधिहरू हो भने भुकाइ रहेको छ। वन कायम वाट नै ठप जोरिएका ह्युण्य भएको। सहजकाल वर्षबाट भएको समुहहरू सहजमा कम भएको पाइछ। वनभएको जदैवविशेषको पालमा हुन सकेको छ। सल्लाहरू भनेको पानीका मूलान पति सुकाएकोले सल्लाको बाटर अन्य प्रजाती लगाउन पनि अधिकार उपभोक्ताहरूको भएको। अपर्रण गन्त आउने मान्य उपभोक्ताहरूको बाट बाटको (फोटो खिन्न, कृपा सोच्छन् तर अधिकारको प्रतिविथेन दिनिन्) ते अब त नाए ह्युण भने उपभोक्ताहरूको भएको। समाधिहरू गोलिको संप्रभु बुढो भएको निर्णय प्रकारमा पुसाले नै गाने गरेको। समाधिहरू अभी समाजका टाडा भारा र रास्तालालाहरूको वर्षवर।

नमूना विधान तालार प्रक्रिया र उपलब्धिहरू

प्रक्रिया

विधानमा संशोधन वर्ग समुहमा अनौपचारिक छलफल। समाधिहरू बीमा निर्माण र सहयोगी संस्थाहरू संग समन्वय। स्वयं सेवकहरू प्रत्येक र विधान निर्माण वारे (अभिनिधिकरण) छलफल।
घरुरी समेत्ताको फारम तयारी (समिलित, स्वच्छ नेपाल, वृद्धिजीव तथा समुहको अनुग्रह संग छलफल)

नामांको स्वच्छन्त्र (पुरानो विवाह र गा गा गा) तथा घरुरी समेत्ताको लागि विवाहमा सम्मनता निर्माण र ट्यूल विवाहमा।

टोलमलाको लागि समुहमा योजना र सुचारु प्राप्त।

टोल वैज्ञानिक संचालन घरुरीमात्र आफ्नो वुडकारो पहिरौ गुलामा, विवाहमा राजनू पान संघर्ष छलफल तथा सम्राट, टोलका उपमन्त्रीहरूको सममता स्तरीकरण, स्तरीकरण अनुसार सदस्य स्तर, बन पैंडवारोको मुख्य निर्धारण, दश वर्ष पहिरको समाज र समुदायक बनको बार्ता परिकल्पना, (विन्यासहरूको लागि कायम्य) र टोल प्रतिनिधिहरूको छलफल।

टोलवार आफ्नो जानकारीहरूको विवाहमा।

टोल प्रतिनिधिहरू, समिलित सदस्य, समाजको वृद्धिजीव, समाजसेवी, गारिब विवाह, विवाह मस्तिज्ञाका कायम्य बीच मनुमा विवाहमा योजना तयारी र निर्माण।

टोल टोलमा मस्तिज्ञा विवाह उपर छलफल। आमेमा तयारी।

आमेमा विवाह विवाह पारित।

भेलवार पारित विवाहलाई सुनाइको लागी जि. व. का./ई. व. का मा पेश।

सुभाष समाजसेवी महिला फाइनल विवाह तयारी।

समुहको अवधारण हरारी गरी आयुक्तलाई निर्धारण सहित जि. व. का मा पेश।

जिल्लाको बन कार्यलयवार विवाहलाई स्वीकृती (जिल्ला बन अधिकारीको हस्ताक्षर)।

उपलब्धिहरू

विवाहनामा अपनले बेड्को पाइमा।

निर्णय प्रक्रियामा सहभागिता र सक्रियता बेड्को पाइमा।

स्वयं घरुरीको विवरण सहितको टोलको विवरण।

दश जोखिमण तथा बन पैंडवारको मुख्य निर्धारण।

बन कार्यलयलाई भूमिकामा फरक बुझाइ (सहभागीकरण)।

सिकाइहरू

सहभागीतात्मक कार्य तथा सिकाइ प्रक्रियावार बनाइएको विवाहनामा समुहको अपनले बढेदो।

विवाहनामा सामाजिक पार्थिव अवधारणलाई बुझानेको लागि कायम्य र प्रक्रियावार समाज रुपान्तरण हुन सकेन। (वैज्ञानिक विवेद, सम्मनता स्तरीकरण)

सङ्करी र म. व. का मुख्यको सहभागीताको बाल्य दिनो र अधिकारीको सम्मन गरी उपार्जित हुन हुनै गरेगाँने। (समुहको बुझाई)

नीतिको अन्य समूहहरूको मात्र यही प्रक्रियावार विवाह तयारीको लागि मान्दो बढेको।

चुनीतीहरू

दैनिक रोजीरोजी जुटाउनु पनि भएको प्रयोग समुहको गारिब विवाहलाई समिलित सदस्य बन गायेको मान्दो।

तली तलायकालाई आफ्नो निर्णयहरू आयुक्तलाई हस्ताक्षर हुन सकेन।

नमुना विवाहनको आकर्षणहरू

घरुरी सवर्ण महिलाको भएको।

पुरानो विवाहको सम्मिलन र दश बर्ष परिकल्पनाको आवश्यक।

बाताबीची सेवा सुविधा लिन पाउने उद्देश्य।

टोलको अवधारण र निर्णयहरूको टोलमा (सममता स्तरीकरण, योजना बनाउने, दण्डाधिकारी गर्न, एक महिलाको एक उपर टोल प्रतिनिधिहरू, समिलित प्रतिनिधिहरू छुने अधिकार।

सम्मनता स्तरीकरण अनुसार:

वर्तमान पैंडवारको दररोहमा फरक

सदस्यता शुल्क, नियमकरण शुल्क

परिचय पत्र: फरक रंगको

प्रतिनिधि रोजमित्र विवाहवार्षिक

शृणुको आवश्यक

वर्तमान अनुशार समिलित प्रतिनिधिहरू।
अध्यक्ष वा सचिव महिला हुने गरि समितिमा ५० प्रतिशत महिला ।
वर्तुभार वस्त्रन्धी स्पष्ट व्यवस्था ।
पुरस्कार तथा सम्मानको व्यवस्था:

- दण्ड जरिपणावाहक प्राप्त रकम ।
- समुह सहयोग गर्ने व्याख्या / संस्थालाई पुरस्कार / कदरपत ।
- कोषको संचालन र पारदर्शिता ।
- कोष संचालनमा महिला अनिवार्य ।
- कोषको संचालन (२५% बन, ३५% गरिरी न्यूनिकरण, ४० सामाजिक तथा संस्थागत विकास)
- ३/३ महिनामा सूचना पाटिमा दान ।
- लेखा परिषद (अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय, सांस्कृतिक, वाह्य)

विभिन्न उपसमिति गठन ।
- समूहको स्वभूमिकायन ।
- अध्यक्ष वा सचिव महिला हुने गरि समितिमा ५० प्रतिशत महिला ।
- वर्तुभार वस्त्रन्धी स्पष्ट व्यवस्था ।
- पुरस्कार तथा सम्मानको व्यवस्था:

- दण्ड जरिपणावाहक प्राप्त रकम ।
- समुह सहयोग गर्ने व्याख्या / संस्थालाई पुरस्कार / कदरपत ।
- कोषको संचालन र पारदर्शिता ।
- कोष संचालनमा महिला अनिवार्य ।
- कोषको संचालन (२५% बन, ३५% गरिरी न्यूनिकरण, ४० सामाजिक तथा संस्थागत विकास)
- ३/३ महिनामा सूचना पाटिमा दान ।
- लेखा परिषद (अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय, सांस्कृतिक, वाह्य)

विभिन्न उपसमिति गठन ।
- समूहको स्वभूमिकायन ।