



PROMOTING SMALL HOLDER TREE GROWING WITHIN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION

Executive Summary

Eradication of poverty remains one of the greatest challenges confronting the world, in particular the developing countries. Poverty reduction is an integral component of sustainable development and forms the core of the Millennium Development Goals and its successor, the Sustainable Development Goals which envisage ending poverty by 2030.

There is therefore a need to assess whether the approaches being pursued are adequate and whether the potential of forestry in poverty alleviation is being realized. Capacity building is required to empower policy makers in identifying and addressing the challenges that they face in their endeavours in reducing poverty through the development and management of the forests resources Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Laos, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu.

Currently, the existing policies and legislation on land tenure, rights, reforestation and Community Forestry do not adequately promote small holder tree farming. To enhance effective implementation of the policies, strategies have been developed in order to guide the tree growing programs. There is expressed willingness of many farmers and the forest dependent communities. Their willingness could become realities with concerted efforts and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, inclusive, beginning with

policy reforms pertinent to land tenure, benefit sharing backed-up with financial resources and the political will to carry out the programs.

For the increasing demand of Timber in the region, illegal harvesting from the Reserved forests continuing. Only the small holder tree growing can be solution of this problem.

The proceeding text provides collective views, strategies and recommendations that is considered imperative for policy decision makers within the affected countries should implement to address sustainable forest management and development of forests resources to improve livelihood of the forest dependent communities.

Key Messages

- The existing policies and legislation in the pilot countries do not recognize the rights of the legitimate holders of small holder growers and this creates a gap on land tenure and rights of the forests dependent communities. Amendment of the existing policies and legislative framework shall pave way for the formulation of strategies, mechanisms and guidelines that would enhance the forest dependent communities articulate their interest, exercise their land tenure rights, meet their obligations, and empower them to mediate their differences in managing the woodlots.
- Encouraging and assisting forest dependent communities to actively participate in tree farming: an avenue aimed at generating income, improving their welfare and quality of life and reducing poverty, because they have been dependent on the forests for their livelihood and they are traditional managers for centuries.
- The Small scale tree growers that have been undertaking tree farming within the designated locations play a significant role in supplying the demand of raw material from the small scale domestic processing facilities in the

area. This program will help restore the biodiversity and rehabilitate denuded forest areas; a means of mitigating climate change effects.

- Capacity building for the forests dependent community and provision of technical advice and financial assistance by the government should promote and enhance this initiative.

Objectives

The existing forest policies on Community forestry do not clearly indicate the land and forest tenure rights between the forest dependent communities and the State so they must be reviewed and amended henceforth.

It is also worthwhile to state here that the demand for raw materials by the small forest industries is remarkable within the region and the legislative reforms should strengthen, promote, and encourage the small scale growers to meaningfully engage in tree growing to generate income and improve their livelihoods.

A need to reform Land and Forest Tenure systems

- Land tenure is commonly misunderstood as equating to “**ownership**” alone but this has been considered misleading because it must be considered as “**Bundle of Rights**”, **which** has the components as underpinned in Table 1 below. Currently the existing legal framework and policies on Land Tenure of the country do not indicate clear demarcation nor recognise the bundle of rights of the forest dependent communities, the rural population, and the State. Due to this missing link conflicts arise and this impedes effective implementation of policies because the government needs the people similarly, the people must know what their bundle of rights are in order for them to collectively and meaningfully connect with each other in implementing the development strategies devised by the government.

Reforms to the existing legal framework is imminent and it must be undertaken forthwith to delineate and apportion the land tenure systems components of the bundle of rights amongst the forest dependent communities and the government as depicted in Table 1.

Table1: Tenure as Bundle of Rights

the community timber forestry programme. The ministry may draft the

N o.	Component	Definition	Existing Situation	Proposed Reforms
1	Access	The right to enter or pass through particular space such as forests or landscape	Full	Full
2	Use or Withdrawal	The right to use (collectively or individually) and benefit from the resources on the forests and land	Partial	Full
3	Management	The right to regulate and make decisions about the forest resources and territories for which the actors have recognized access and withdrawal rights	None	Partial
4	Exclusion	The right to refuse another individual, group or entity access to and the use of particular resource	None	None
5	Alienation	The right to transfer one's rights to another entity whether through sale, lease, the use of resource as collateral or inheritance	None	None

- The current tenure systems is a deterrent for the forest dependent communities thus no improvement in their livelihoods, no income generation and poverty is rife however, reformation leading to devolution and clear demarcation of land rights amongst all the stakeholders is anticipated to enhance small scale tree farming amongst the rural and forest dependent communities.
- The demand of timber is increasing day by day while the illegal tree harvesting from the conserved forests area is also increased with the growing demand. Many of the neighbouring communities of the unused land are living below the poverty line. Hence, the prevalent illegal activities which they deem as the only avenue to generate their cash income.
- Forest Department has already marked suitable land and neighbouring communities eligible to grow timber trees on the land. Forests research institute has made a map with the proposed area showing suitable tree types. Ministry of Environment and Forests can provide permission to start

deed and set the profit share percentages between the government and the stakeholders.

- After implementing the programme, it is expected to upgrade the standard of living of the stakeholders and meet the demand of the forest products needs of the local market, from the industry at the community.
- Tree-planting is common in many countries, Governments own about half of the productive forest plantations in the world. The political and legal environment has a significant impact on smallholder tree planting: in addition to sufficient demand for plantation wood, land and tree ownership security is necessary to allow the long-term investment in tree planting. The growing global demand for wood based products, land use pressures and fragmentation of land ownership is already starting to increase the role of smallholders in wood production.

Small Holder Tree plantations is foreseen to increase revenue for local communities

According to FAO, planted forests account some 7% and fast growing industrial

plantations less than 2% of all forests. The largest industrial plantations are in the US, China and Brazil, each with over 5 million ha of industrial plantations, and India and Indonesia following with their over 2.5 million hectares. Presently about one third of the industrial round wood originates from plantations.

Governments still own about half of the productive plantations in the world, although different kinds of leasing and management partnership arrangements are slowly increasing on these plantations. Private smallholders own about one third of global productive plantations, and corporates own less than one fifth of global plantation area.

Many of the countries with a significant forest industry have at some point used incentives to boost the forest sector development. These include Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, New Zealand, South Africa and Finland. Many of these countries continue to do so. The newest incentive schemes have been established in Uganda, Malaysia, Thailand and Costa Rica. Successful incentive schemes have helped creating a critical mass of forests to support the establishment of forest-based industries, to catalyse socio-economic development and reduce poverty in rural areas, reduce pressure on natural forests and strengthen land tenure.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Reform and strengthen existing policies in a way to be easier for smallholders to comply with the regulations.

More priority and emphasize be given to forestry activities while there should be more support to farmers to form forest cooperative or enterprise so that they can add value to their product. There are needs for supportive environment for business, including training and capital.

Need land tenure reform to ensure the rights of access to forest products for smallholders. Forest products that are grown by farmers themselves (like plantations) should be treated like agriculture products, with no complex and

unfair approval procedures to harvest and sell.

There is a Need to decentralise power to smallholders to take decisions while national governments should take more priority and emphasize to forestry activities and in particular the small holder tree farmers.

To give assurance and hope to farmers and to generate more interest into the tree planting activity, it is very important that their access to market is determine and is available. Then only that the tree growing activity will be sustainable. In addition, there has to be assistance in having a benefit sharing mechanism and insurance coverage mechanism in place.

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