

Contribution of Watershed Management Program to the Livelihoods of the Local People

A case study from Kathekhola Subwatershed, Baglung, Nepal

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Background of the study

Being Nepal, in the Himalayan region, most of its land is fragile. The farming system heavily depends on natural resources such as land, forest and water. The increase of the population and its dependency on land resources has resulted on the degradation of the watersheds where they live. Government of Nepal has been implementing watershed management program to conserve these watersheds, maintain the ecological balance and improve the productivity of land.

The slogan of poverty reduction is worthless without considering the sustainable management of land resources, as the majority of the people depend on these resources. Poverty and livelihood are interlinked to each other. The study has aimed to assess the contribution of the watershed management program to the livelihoods of the local people considering the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) defined by Department For International Development (DFID), 2001.

Objectives of the study

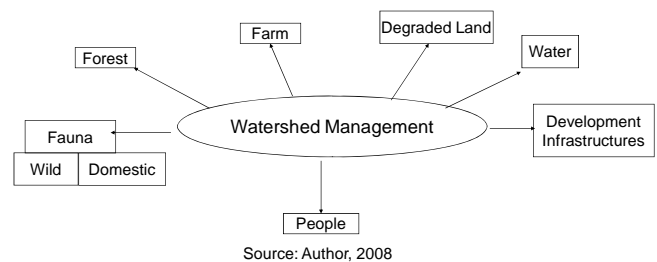
General objective

- To assess the contribution of watershed management program to the livelihoods of the local people.

Specific objectives:

- To assess the watershed management activities implemented through different programs.
- To assess the approaches of watershed management programs.
- To assess the contribution of watershed management activities on human, social, financial, natural and physical attributes of the livelihoods.

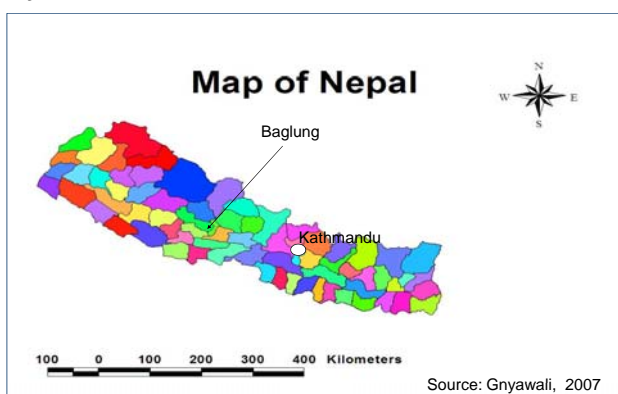
Components of Watershed Management



Research Methodology

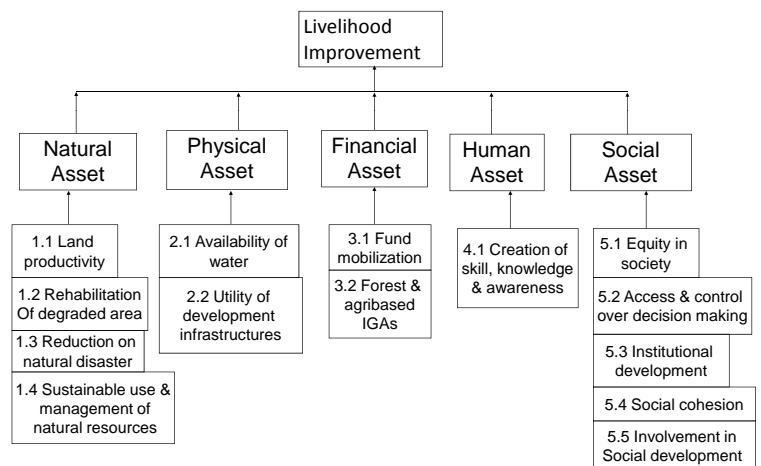
For the study, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through house hold survey, focus group discussions, key-informant interviews, field observations, groups plan/constitution, minute books, related publications and web research. Natural Resources Management Sector Assistance Program - Soil Component was selected for study which was implemented for five years in Kathekhola subwatershed of Baglung district. Criteria and indicators of watershed management program that contribute to the livelihoods of the local people have been identified on the basis of Sustainable Livelihood Framework defined by DFID (2001).

Study Area



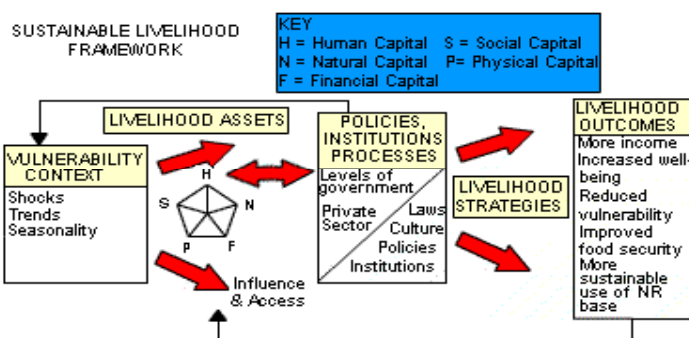
Key Findings

- Criteria of watershed management program for livelihood improvement



- The program under studied shows that it has contributed to all the five assets, though the level of extent is different. It has contributed more towards natural asset.
- Different watershed management programs have slightly different approaches based on their objectives.

Conceptual Framework



Conclusion

Though, the watershed management program is not the panacea to maintain the sustainable livelihoods, it contributes to the livelihoods outcomes as mentioned in the SLF (DFID, 2001); more income, increased well-being, reduced vulnerability, improved food security and more sustainable use of natural base. The program under study contributes to all assets of the sustainable livelihoods of the local people. The level of extent to which it can contribute to the five assets of the Sustainable Livelihood Framework depends on the approaches and objectives of the program. Participatory group approach followed by the program is encouraging.

Recommendations

- More attention should be given towards the coordination with other organizations.
- Phasing-out strategy is essential while terminating the program.
- Separate act and laws should be introduced to facilitate Community Based Organizations.