## 5

# The Pace, Nature and Logic of Empowerment at Co-Management Sites

*Utpal Dutta, Philip J. DeCosse, and Ram A. Sharma*

Several Nishorgo-commissioned reports have explored dimensions of the processes and outcomes relating to the empowering practices of previously marginalized co-management stakeholders. In 2005, a gender assessment (Rahman *et al*., 2005) reviewed the status and options for strengthening women's role in co-management. Subsequently, Dutta (2006) revisited the gender issue and also explored the empowerment process for the poor and ethnic minorities. In 2008, a study led by an external consultant and including members of the Forest Department and the Project team, assessed the growth and development of the eight Co-Management Committees with the objective of recommending ways to strengthen them (Khan *et al*., 2008).

This chapter examines how empowerment evolved, identifies some reasons for the outcomes that occurred, and draws a number of lessons for the future.

## Starting Assumptions and Subsequent Adaptation

When the Nishorgo co-management process was designed and during its early implementation, the underlying assumption was that local stakeholders would – if given the opportunity – seize the chance to play a role in co-management of Protected Areas (PAs). Although it would take time, it was expected that even poor and other marginalized stakeholders would begin to use the authority they would gain from Government Orders and associated rights, and that they would assert their rights.

The history of social forestry was cited by the Forest Department (FD) as evidence that this transformation would occur. In some parts of the country, particularly in Tangail and Mymensingh Districts, north of Dhaka, local people had shown little interest when social forestry programs began in the early 1990s. But after receiving income through benefit-sharing packages, word spread and more local households came to demand similar opportunities from the Forest Department. The team recognized that such participation would take time under Nishorgo's co-management model, but the general assumption was that it would ensue. Both the Government Order (GO) formalizing the Co-Management Committees and Councils and the Government-approved PA Management Plans for Nishorgo sites included opportunities for Councils and Committees to assert their authority and take part in managing and benefiting from the PAs.

In the first year after the first Co-Management Organizations (CMO)[1] were formed, however, it became clear that the empowerment process was not taking place as quickly as expected. Even after the approval and release of the GO and the Management Plans, CMOs

---

[1]    The term "Co-Management Organizations (CMO)" describes the full governing structure created by the Nishorgo Government Order on co-management, meaning that both Councils and their executive and implementing Committees are included. If the text refers to one specific part of the CMO (Council or Committee), it is done so by name.

still looked regularly for guidance about what they could and could not do. They hesitated to raise issues collectively with the Forest Department, or other government agencies. They regularly looked for approval or at least consent from the Project staff. And marginalized groups generally responded to new opportunities for asserting rights even more slowly than the Committees themselves. Although on paper the Forest Department had opened the door to shared governance, an active governance process, in which the heretofore marginalized find and assert their voice, was not occurring at the expected pace.



*Participatory and Rapid Rural Appraisal methods were used to better understand governance and resource issues after Nishorgo's launch.* [Nasim Aziz]

The approved PA Management Plans included strong language opening the door for the CMOs to be part of decision-making. Under those plans, silvicultural operations in the PA should only be done by those individuals designated as "beneficiaries" to the PA management process. This language, and the spirit of the PA Management Plan, opened the door for the CMOs to pressure the FD to ensure that such opportunities for labor would go to the community patrollers or other community members in need. FD often engages this labor at little or no cost from forest villagers as part of an unwritten arrangement by which those Villagers are allowed to remain on their land. But the FD may also engage other local labor. With CMO formation and Management Plan approval, such engagements of labor by the FD – executed independently of the CMO – should have been done in concert with the CMO, but such consultation rarely took place, and indeed the CMO rarely pushed for it to happen.

In addition to the rights included in the PA Management Plans and the Government Order, FD senior staff (particularly the Project Director) informed all participating Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs), Assistant Conservators of Forests (ACFs), and Range Officers that the FD's own Annual Development Planning process should be executed jointly with the CMO. This, too, opened the door to a more active involvement of the CMO in knowing what was being planned and being part of the solutions.

The remainder of this section offers suggestions of explanatory factors for the slower-than-expected pace of empowerment at Nishorgo pilot sites.

## The perceived need for rights to be re-stated and re-articulated, usually in written form

While the GO and the Management Plans were prepared in the spirit of promoting basic rights and roles for the CMOs and associated local stakeholders in PA governance, both CMO members and the local FD staff repeatedly cited the lack of an explicit statement of rights. Generally, in any dialogue about granting rights to the CMO and its members, both CMO and

the FD pushed for an even more explicit clarification of rights than was included in the relevant authorizing documents.

It was proposed by Project and senior FD staff, for example, that it would be in keeping with the GO and Management Plans for the CMO to operate small informal concession operations on PA lands to serve nature tourists. On numerous occasions, however, local FD officials either questioned or halted such ideas by claiming that "it is not written anywhere that this can be done." Indeed, this explicit right – to operate concessions on the Government PA land – was not explicitly included in any of the key authorizing documents. But rather than the CMO asking the grounds for rejection of such requests ("where does it say that it can't be done?"), the local FD argument was generally accepted. The CMO members were not willing to challenge the decisions of local FD staff, even where they might have, either by challenging them directly or appealing to higher FD authorities.

## Risk to the élite members of CMO from making a "wrong" move

The predominant role given to the Union Parishad (UP) members was noted in the previous chapter. One outcome of this preponderant role was a relatively lower willingness of the other CMO members to challenge the status quo. UP Chairpersons may be aligned with vested interests in the PA, and may stand to lose support from key parties as and when power relations at the PA change. Whatever the exact cause, it did become clear that UP Chairpersons remained less challenging and confrontational – certainly in the area of pushing for PA management rights – than had been expected.

## Lack of local FD leadership in facilitating empowerment

While there were a number of exceptions, it would be accurate to say that most of the DFOs, ACFs, and Range Officers discouraged CMOs and other local stakeholders from exercising their new rights and gaining power. The Project Directors of Nishorgo at FD made a number of field visits where they stated their support for CMOs and for their own staff playing a facilitation role to implement the project, but this guidance was not systematically followed. Rather, more than a few DFOs and ACFs would deliberately distance themselves from the CMO so that they could blame any forest problems on the new CMOs.

## Roles and effectiveness of the facilitation teams at field sites

One would have expected the Project team, including its partner NGOs, to be in the forefront of pushing for greater empowerment of the CMO and related stakeholders. While the team did indeed make strides in this area, it did not perform as effectively as it might have. One reason is the precarious position of partner NGOs under projects like Nishorgo. The empowerment roles required by Nishorgo called for the partner NGOs – in this case Community Development Centre Chittagong (CODEC) and Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Services (RDRS) – to assist CMOs in directly challenging the government when necessary. However, such direct challenges by NGOs to government staff is considered risky by NGOs, especially where their criticism of government may be linked to negative feedback of their work in general, since there can be repercussions for that NGOs ability to win future project from the government.

Due in part to such possibilities for retributive action by the Government against NGOs that become too confrontational, participating field NGOs under Nishorgo – and indeed under other projects – rarely emphasized or gave priority to political empowerment. Rather, they focused on economic empowerment, assuming that improved economic situation would lead to better ability to challenge the status quo. In practice, the bias resulted in a greater emphasis on poverty reduction activities under Nishorgo and a lesser emphasis on social empowerment. As the project progressed, a shift towards social empowerment activities was pursued, but the NGO partners – or at least their field staff members – were much more comfortable with economic activities than they were with the complex issues of changing power relations through strengthening the CMO structure.

## Hesitance to believe that the status quo can change

One of the remarkable characteristics of citizens' views of governance at the Nishorgo PAs was the deep-seated belief that the status quo would not change and that the élite would remain in control, no matter what changes in rights might be promulgated on paper. This resigned attitude towards new governance structures perhaps reflects the accumulated weight of many years of corrupt governance at this level. It was extremely difficult, for example, to build momentum for challenging illegally located brick fields near the Teknaf and Chunati sites in the south because both rich and poor believed that those brick field owners would still be there well after any project intervention had been completed. In spite of GO and Management Plan statements to the contrary, few of the poor or otherwise marginalized believed that they would ever truly have a voice vis-à-vis the Forest Department, or in the face of the local élite. The Nishorgo project team underestimated this hesitancy of the poor to take up opportunities to assert power. Once recognizing the shortcoming, the Project team put greater emphasis on such activities as:

- Obtaining government approval for financial resource allocation to the CMOs from entry fees

- Working to obtain more formal rights and authorization for CMO-delegated individuals to take part in forest restoration in both buffer areas and degraded core areas

- More training for and re-orientation of field level FD staff in co-management

- Developing rights-based manuals for local communities (See DeCosse and Ward, 2006)

- Strengthening other powers and written authorities for the CMOs

These were all efforts to more formally clarify those rights granted to the CMOs.

## The nature of empowerment at Nishorgo sites

When the project began, the project team expected empowerment to be manifested by demands from the CMOs to share in benefits from PA management. We expected, for example, that

the CMOs would demand that designated community patrol members get work in subsidiary silvicultural operations. Or that no contracting be executed by the FD without full CMO prior notification and awareness, or that the CMO might expose improper behavior on the part of local FD officials or other local people, and press for appropriate punishment of such accused actors. In fact, although such exercises of authority rarely occurred, the CMOs did assert themselves in other ways.

Perhaps the most public exhibition of the empowerment process took place at Lawachara National Park regarding a gas pipeline laid through the Park in 2005 and 2006. From the time that Union Oil Company of California (UNOCAL) proposed to lay the pipeline (Chevron later bought UNOCAL's rights), the incipient CMO voiced concerns about the process by which that decision was made. Two years later Chevron decided to conduct seismic testing in the Park area. This decision, too, raised concerns not only at the local level but also at the national level; the Lawachara CMO spent considerable time discussing and debating



*Community members raising their hands to join in patrol group in the Dolubari community next to Lawachara National Park.* [Nishorgo Support Project]

the position it should take, and it eventually expressed its concerns forcefully to Chevron. The process has strengthened the Committee in its willingness to take a public stand on issues of concern to the area, even if it has not been able to significantly affect its outcome.

Empowerment processes also evolved in relation to community patrolling. Since 2006 it has been apparent that the number of offense cases filed by the FD against local people has fallen considerably. A major factor explaining this decline has been the increased confidence and role of the patrollers within the forests. Whereas previously, the FD would issue offense cases first and inform people later, now the patrollers are aware that cases might be filed and they often intervene with the FD to preempt escalation of conflict into the courts, at the same time persuading offenders not to continue felling trees. This is an expression of increased empowerment by the patrol groups and their effectiveness in reducing logging.

A third example of empowerment as it has evolved comes from the ethnic minority communities at Lawachara and Satchari National Parks. Although it is premature to say that a permanent change has taken place in the status and rights of the ethnic minority communities there, it would be fair to state that the social status of minority members on the CMOs has indeed risen. The voice and strength of the leader of the Khasia Forest Villagers within Lawachara (known as the "mantri" or minister) have grown as the years of Nishorgo have progressed. A similar process has evolved for the Tripura community within the Satchari National Park CMO, where the status of the mantri and the leading women of the Tripura community are increasingly strong in governing decision-making.

## Engaging women

Nishorgo aimed to support active involvement of women at field sites. One central feature of this strategy was the deliberate allocation of alternative livelihood opportunities to women. Such women-targeted alternatives included nursery development, poultry management, pig rearing (for the Tripura), and weaving. The Tripura Gift Collection value chain was intended from the beginning to be a woman-focused business opportunity. In addition to income opportunities directed to women, the project expected women to be actively involved in PA governance. This focus on women was followed not only for reasons of equity, but also because it was assumed that active involvement of women around the PAs was essential to successful conservation.

A gender assessment was conducted in 2004 (Rahman et al., 2005) to guide this effort with the aim of developing "site-specific and stakeholder-specific strategies for engaging women in a way that increases the likelihood of success of the PA co-management effort." This gender assessment team developed a list of recommended strategies for engaging women more actively at many levels of the project. But the gender recommendations were too numerous, not sufficiently grounded in the complex gender relations at community level, and not as practical as they needed to be. As a result of this shortcoming, the project team was not as successful as it should have been in developing subtle and yet clear strategies for engaging women more forcefully and actively in the governing process.



*Poultry rearing, such as this example at Rema Kalenga, was extended through training at all Nishorgo sites.* [Sirajul Hossain]

It became apparent by 2006 that there had not been fundamental improvements in the empowerment of women. Although the GO for the CMOs provided for female members, there were virtually no woman active in the eight CMOs. The project commissioned a new study on the empowerment status not only of women, but also of ethnic minorities and the poor. This study (Dutta, 2006) proposed a shift in emphasis away from a predominantly economic empowerment approach (that up to then had been the implicit approach of the field team) towards a focus on more significant roles for women in the governance process. It also identified specific activities for women that would enhance their participation in the conservation process.

One positive indication of changing gender roles comes from the involvement of women in forest protection and patrolling. The idea of involving women in group patrolling of forests only emerged after a CMO visit to similar co-managed sites in West Bengal (India) in 2006. Three female CMO members took part in that visit and learned of Indian women patrolling and protecting forests near their houses. During the debriefing upon their return, these travelers requested that efforts be made to promote women patrolling within Bangladesh. When the Project team discussed the importance of testing female patrols, it was assumed that such a proposition

would be rejected outright by the CMOs and by local leaders around the PAs. Nevertheless, two groups of women volunteered to patrol, one at Lawachara National Park and one at Teknaf Wildlife Sanctuary.

In the short time that they have been operating, these two women's patrols have generated important insights into how gender-differentiated interventions can contribute



*In the villages on the western side of the Teknaf Wildlife Sanctuary women remain veiled in public, and are observed outside of households with less frequency than in other Nishorgo sites. Here, the women at Baharchara near Teknaf take part in an environment day celebration.* [Goutam Biswas]

to conservation. While the men's patrols operate principally at night time and alone in the core zones of PAs, the women's groups operate principally during the day and travel along the PA edges. The women's patrols are far more likely to interact with households in the area, thereby acting as a vector for messages about co-management and about the importance of reducing illegal felling. In some cases women, while patrolling, have gone directly into the homes of families suspected of timber extraction and examined their storerooms to see if the accusations were correct. When asked about this type of behavior, men from the same community stated that for reasons of maintaining social norms, they could never go into another family home in this way.

Another distinguishing feature of men and women's patrols revolves around the perceived social benefit of the patrolling process. While men in general were far more interested in obtaining direct economic benefits in return for patrolling, women expressed more interest in the opportunity to be out and about in a cohesive social unit. It appears that female patrols provide a happy coincidence – meeting forest conservation needs and also the interests of women for social interactions and making a contribution. As a result, woman patrol activities were expanded as the project period progressed.

## Engagement with ethnic minorities, and especially indigenous groups

While the status and role of women in society near Nishorgo pilot sites can at least be discussed openly, the status and rights of indigenous minorities is generally a taboo subject for discussion in open foray. Assessments at Nishorgo sites have made it clear that a persistent bias against indigenous minorities pervades social relations in and around the Nishorgo PAs. In the first gender assessment, women young and old from ethnic Tripura communities stated their fear and discomfort at walking alone to and from nearby towns, for fear of abusive treatment they regularly receive at the hands of non-minority populations.

The topic of discrimination against indigenous minorities is also difficult to raise in the FD because of the social and political implications of recognizing those minorities. Forest Villagers – mostly made up of different ethnic minority groups – reside on lands granted to them within the Lawachara, Satchari, Rema-Kalenga, and Teknaf PAs. Although these Forest Villagers live

within the boundaries of PAs with the earlier consent of the FD, today's FD officials hesitate even to broach a discussion about the terms of their presence on FD land. During a visit to Lawachara National Park in 2006, two regional experts on conservation (Ashish Kothari of India and Sarath Kotagama of Sri Lanka) both recommended urgent clarification of tenure status and rights for these minority Forest Villagers. While a resolution of land rights is a complicated challenge and one that is unlikely to be addressed without the highest political support, Nishorgo has worked towards more modest incremental empowerment of ethnic minorities at co-management sites.

One of the leading fears of the Forest Department related to minority Forests Villagers stems precisely from the assumption that Forest Villages will take advantage of political support to demand land rights within the PAs. Because of this concern, and possibly also the personal biases of select FD officials, the FD as a whole at Nishorgo sites has not substantively engaged with indigenous minorities on issues of land rights or other rights related to forest PA benefits. However, leading members of the Department have demonstrated a much more open approach to interaction with Forest Villagers.

The project team, for its part, also made errors in its interaction with indigenous minorities. The Nishorgo team began in its interactions with the indigenous groups by placing an emphasis on livelihood activities, under the implicit assumption that the indigenous communities saw livelihood activities as a highest priority. But it subsequently became clearer that for several indigenous groups, enhancing economic opportunities was less important than enhancing rights and recognition. In the Khasia Forest Village at Lawachara NP, for example, the mantri responded to proposed livelihood activities by pointedly requesting that the project team find ways to ensure the privacy and respect of community members in the face of uninvited tourist intrusions into the village. Accordingly, the project team worked with the mantri to install protective gates and signs that would instruct wandering tourists of areas within the village to be avoided for privacy reasons.



*This simple bamboo fence is being maintained by the Khasia community within Lawachara National Park, dividing a publically accessible walking trail from the plantation areas in which betel vines are cultivated.* [Philip J. DeCosse]

## Federations of the poor as a vehicle for empowerment

The Project team approach to empowerment of the poor also emphasized formation of federations of poor groups. The federation approach developed by RDRS had been widely considered successful in empowering communities in northwest Bangladesh. Under Nishorgo, Forest Resource User Groups (FRUGs) would be formed from low income households and gradually federated into bodies that could speak on behalf of the larger group.

The Management of Aquatic Ecosystems through Community Husbandry (MACH) project

had federated (using a different approach) its Resource User Groups (RUGs) into organizations that are legally registered and operate revolving funds for enterprise and livelihood development (Federations of RUGs). This was based on a common membership of poor wetland users and aimed at diversifying incomes and helping members move out of fishing. But MACH, having helped poor wetland users organize on economic grounds, also required that RUG members and other poor be a majority in the membership of broader Resource Management Organizations (RMOs) created to ensure sustainable use and restoration of specific areas of wetland. This was done with the aim of advancing a "pro-poor" attitude among the range of fishers, farmers, and local opinion leaders who formed the RMOs (note that the RMO membership is from direct wetland-using villages and has limited diversity – they do not include as members, for example, UP members or businessmen). Since most households living around wetlands make some use of fish and other wetland products, a common interest in sustainable use and conservation could be developed, when it was shown to restore productivity over degraded levels.

But at Nishorgo sites, although the Groups were defined as forest resource users, their actual interest in forest PA conservation was much more diluted and diffused than the MACH RMO interest in fisheries. The Nishorgo FRUGs, like the MACH RUGs, were ultimately and primarily interested in livelihood opportunities from any source, whether or not the forest was conserved or would help generate that opportunity. And since the forest PA does not provide extensive direct livelihood opportunities, the Nishorgo FRUG had little direct stake in forest PA conservation. Rather, they were in effect just groupings of poor who happened to live near a given PA. This disconnect between the FRUGs of Nishorgo and their need or desire for PA conservation posed a fundamental obstacle to creation of strong federated bodies.

As Nishorgo progressed, the team worked to shift the focus to those FRUGs that were directly involved in patrolling, and those that would be able to directly benefit from forest conservation (e.g., through social forestry opportunities, participation in silvicultural operations, participation in tourism enterprises, etc.).

## Income and social status differences among co-management organization members

The vast disparity of income levels and social status of members within the CMOs itself dampened the process of empowerment by disadvantaged groups. Including opinion leaders such as UP chairmen, professors, and businessmen within the CMOs reduced the likelihood that members of lower social standing could make their voices heard. Even with strong project facilitation it was difficult to persuade anyone other than these élite persons to speak up at CMO meetings. Although the status and the confidence of federation leaders increased over time, these leaders still played a secondary role compared with more prominent actors. Slowly, more and more members of the CMOs have become willing to speak up at meetings. But a modification in the governance framework would be necessary to ensure that the voice of the disadvantaged is heard within the governing framework. A new body representing only the interests of the poor may be considered as part of the governance framework of PAs.[2]

---

[2]  Subsequent to the drafting of this chapter, a new co-management Government Order has been released that does include a "People's Forum" in response precisely to this issue.

## Perceived acceptability of corruption

The co-management approach requires transparency in decision-making, and the Nishorgo team took steps to ensure such transparency through such actions as open annual planning, public meetings, and published financial reports. The team assumed that if participating stakeholders were made aware of improper behavior, then some social pressure would be brought to bear upon the instigators, and behavior of those instigators within the local community would change. The process as it developed at Nishorgo sites did indeed increase the amount of information concerning the improper behavior of stakeholders from the area, including in many cases from members of the CMO itself. The team learned over time, however, that it had overestimated the extent of such social pressure and its ability to change behavior. In effect, the team miscalculated the acceptability of corruption and misbehavior at this local level. It was fitting therefore, that the CMO assessment (Khan et al., 2008) should recommend development of clear reward and punishment systems within the social structure of the CMOs.

## Lessons Learned

A number of lessons have emerged in this area of empowerment.

*The co-management governance structure that developed under Nishorgo has not sufficiently encouraged active participation of the marginalized.* While the concerted effort of the implementing team and the introduction of complementary activities did enhance the role of women, minorities, and the poor, their ability to take up this opportunity was limited by the context of current social norms and CMO structure. Changes are needed so that these voices are more easily heard. To this end, future co-management efforts would benefit from a complementary institution at PA level explicitly designed to encourage open expression of ideas by the marginalized.

*Without explicit attention to clarifying land and non-land rights of indigenous minority Forest Villagers, their active participation in co-management will not be secure.* While the discussion of land rights can and will continue between minorities and the Government, we believe that important clarification of other rights can be undertaken at the same time for Forest Villagers. Rights may be formalized, for example, for ethnic minorities to take part in benefiting from planned forest thinning operations, or enrichment plantation activities, or opportunities for capitalizing on nature tourism within the PA.

*Without a fundamental shift in the perspective and bureaucratic incentives of local FD staff, it is not realistic to expect a rapid process of empowerment.* An important explanation for the delay in active governance by the local stakeholders derives from passive or even counterproductive interventions by DFOs, ACFs, and Range Officers. DeCosse and Huda (2005) noted the pre-eminent role played by the Forest Department in the eyes of local poor stakeholders, and that the views of other local stakeholders around the pilot PAs could be characterized as: "If the FD acts correctly, the forest will be saved. If it acts badly, forest will be lost." The corollary to this belief, they noted, was both the power of the FD in the local arena, and the lack of belief that local people could truly influence forest conservation. The co-management process being supported is slowly leading to greater opportunities for the

marginalized to take power and authority in PA management, but in the context of Bangladesh, it will not systematically occur until and unless the local FD staff provides its support to the process.

*The governance structures and composition that best empower local marginalized stakeholders should be allowed to differ between PAs.* The "one-size-fits-all" governance approach tested at Nishorgo sites needs to be made more flexible in future co-management efforts. Differences in the social and economic context around each PA (scale, social diversity, economic pressures, etc.) necessitate a framework that enables an adaptive approach whereby specific socio-economic and biophysical characteristics are taken on board when developing specific governance structures and processes.

## Conclusion

The Nishorgo project responded to pressing needs at pilot sites in 2004 with the creation of a co-management governance structure that includes membership from many categories of stakeholders around the PAs. At the time, this inclusiveness was believed necessary to stem the principal conservation challenge: constant and steady illegal extraction of timber products from the PAs. While this degree of inclusiveness may have been effective at spreading awareness of Nishorgo and its objectives, and in encouraging participation of many stakeholder groups, the voices and active participation of marginalized groups was compromised in the process. Within a year of formation of the eight CMOs it was clear that the voices of women, and the poor in particular, were muted by comparison with their numbers. The Nishorgo team has taken steps to redress the effective exclusion of poor woman and ethnic minorities. Continued efforts need to be made in this regard at present and future co-management sites.

More generally, the pace at which the CMOs became active in demanding to exercise the rights they gained on paper in the GO and management plans was slower than expected. This hesitancy stemmed from: lack of supportive roles by some FD officers, a desire to have all rights explicitly stated and written, a lack of belief that the status quo could change, and the vested interests of some CMO members.

## References

DeCosse, Philip J. and Khawja Shamsul Huda. 2006. Poverty, Corruption and Other Challenges to Protected Area Management: Voices from the Field in Bangladesh. In Policy Matters: Poverty Wealth and Conservation, IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, 134-142. Dhaka: IUCN Commission

DeCosse, Philip J. and Susan Ward. 2006. *Rights Reference Manual for Zones of Good Governance.* Dhaka: Nishorgo Support Project of Bangladesh Forest Department.

Dutta, Utpal. 2006. Participation, Rights and Empowerment of Women, Poor and Ethnic Communities in Protected Area Management. Dhaka: Nishorgo Support Project of Bangladesh Forest Department.

Khan, Niaz Ahmed, Utpal Dutta, Modinul Ahsan, Michael Mrong, Rafiqa Sultana, Abdur Rahman. 2008. An Exploratory Study on Performance and Capacity of Nishorgo Support Project (NSP) Co-Management Committees: Collation and Overview. Dhaka: Nishorgo Support Project of Bangladesh Forest Department.

Khan, Niaz Ahmed. 2008. Towards a Conceptual Framework for Performance and Capacity Assessment of Co-Management Committees as Local Institutions. Dhaka: Nishorgo Support Project of Bangladesh Forest Department.

Rahman, Saidur, Jessica Bellama, Molly Minnis, Alia Islam, Lutfun Nahar and Shormi Paul. 2005. Gender and Conservation: Strategies for Implementation of Co-Management at NSP Sites. Dhaka: Nishorgo Support Project of Bangladesh Forest Department.