

Monitoring Visit Report

Visit Details

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Location	Gaurishankar Conservation Area Project (GCAP)
Dates	30 th Dec 2019 – 3 rd Jan 2020
Objectives	To monitor the Programs, Administration and Finance at GCAP

Agenda

The following activities were completed as part of the monitoring visit:

Date	Place	Activity	Participants
December 30, 2019	Kathmandu-Dolkha	Travel	Monitoring team
December 31, 2019	Singati, Dolkha	Interaction with GCA staff SWOT Analysis	GCA staff representing Dolkha, Ramechap and Dolkha office
January 1, 2019	Chankhu, Dolkha	Visit Nepal Year 2020 interaction program, Singati	GCA staff, CAMCs representatives, Mother's groups, security personnel, Local; Division forest representatives
		Visit to Chanku-Hi-Tech Nursery, Chanku	Monitoring team, Singati office staff, Nursery staffs
		Visit to Sherpa Homestay and interaction with the Homestay Promoters-Chanku	Monitoring team; Singati office staff; Representatives of Chankhu Homestay Promoters

January 2, 2019	Sivalaya, Ramechap	Visit to Shivalaya, Ramechap Community interaction, Chuchure CAMC, Ramechap	Monitoring team Chuchure CAMC representatives, Homestay promoters, Garjhyang; community local leaders
		Homestay visit in Chuchure, Ramechap	
January 3, 2019	Dolkha	Kalinchowk visit	Monitoring Team
January 4, 2019		Travel	Monitoring team

General Observations

Interaction with GCA staff:

Half day interaction program was held at Singati office, Dolkha with the representation of all field offices of GCAP. In order to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to GCAP, SWOT analysis was done and focused on administrative, financial and programmatic agendas. From the analysis, it is comprehended that GCA has dedicated and multi-tasking staff and now has good coordination with local communities to work in the community. GCA as being one of the important biodiversity hotspots, there are diverse opportunities to work on biodiversity conservation, climate change, conservation economy prioritizing tourism and many more. However, limited financial resource and limited human resource confines the quality and effective implementation of the program; non-updated conservation area regulations can be taken as big challenges in effectiveness of GCAP. Before GCA establishment, communities were collecting and using natural resources freely. Even some the villagers were involved in illegal poaching of wild animals. After GCA establishment, the strict implementation of conservation rules and regulations has resulted conflict between communities and GCAP. The details of the SWOT Analysis can be referred on Annex 1.

ii. Community interaction

Interactions with rural municipality ward president, CAMC president, CAMC members, and mother's groups were done to understand the impacts of GCAP on locals from their perspectives and to know about the role played by GCAP in community-based conservation. Issues of HWC, limited financial resources, community dissatisfaction in restriction for utilization of natural resources as per the conservation area rules and regulations and diversification of tourism were discussed as major challenges. For that, GCA need to conduct awareness program on HWC; maximize budget allocation for need based conservation intervention; and to identify the high potential tourism destination and promote tourism. In order to enhance the leadership of women and marginalized groups, leadership development activities focused to women and marginalized groups should be designed to take conservation stewardship.



Community interaction, Dolkha

iii. Hi-Tech Satuwa Nursery Visit



Hi-Tech Satuwa Nursery, Chankhu

Non-timber forest product (NTFP) especially Satuwa is one of the income sources of livelihood in GCA, and some of the communities has high dependency on it. So, to upscale the NTFP, Hi-tech Satuwa Nursery was established in Chankhu as an important endeavour on NTFP promotion in GCA. There are more than 3000 seedlings at present. It will produce more in coming years to diversify household income in the area.

iv. Homestay sites visit

GCAP has provided support to local communities to establish homestays sites in Chankhu-Dolkha (10) and Chuchure-Ramechhap (18) as one of the ecotourism enterprises, aimed to decrease forest dependency, protect natural and cultural heritages, and develop local livelihood. We had visited Chankhu-Dolkha and Chuchure-Ramechhap to observe the functionality of the newly introduced endeavour of GCAP.

Homestay promoters are enthusiastic to promote it; however, they feel they have limited knowledge to do it accordingly. We observed that if the homestay sites are connected and linked with other potential trekking routes, it gets more tourists which also help for wider publicity. Once the visitors know more about homestay facility and enjoy local culture and food then it could become sustainable and one of the major source of income to rural households. We also found that the villagers were positive about the initiative taken by GCAP and started to realize the importance of conservation.



Homestay, Chankhu-Dolkha and Chuchure-Ramechhap

v. Observation visit to Kalinchowk

General observation visit was done in Kalinchowk area to identify the issues related to Kalinchowk as being one of the religious sites under the GCA. There were no any security posts and information centres on the route to Kalinchowk. During our visit, we stuck on the way back from kalinchowk because of snow. All the visitors faced problem while returning back so the only choice was walking to get back to the destination; and some of the visitors slipped down and got injured. There were no emergency rescue services. So it is highly recommended to take necessary actions from GCAP to establish information centers or check posts to provide important information to ease visitors especially during harsh weather.

vi. Observations related to accounts

1. Although it is informed that Posting in Journal and Cash Book has been completed up to 20 December, 2019. However, during our visit, we observed that ledger posting was not done.
2. In some instance it was found that amount more than Rs. 5,000/- wasn't paid directly to vendor through A/c payee cheque and suggest the accountant and OIC to issue A/c payee cheque to vendor.
3. It was found that the Accounting Software Tally ERP 9 wasn't used to record the accounting transaction. Manual method is used to record the accounting transaction and strict instruction was given to accountant of GCAP to use Accounting software Tally ERP 9 to record the accounting transaction from onward January 2020.
4. Bank Reconciliation Statement was prepared monthly and copy of same is obtained.
5. Monthly financial report and budget vs. expenditure report was updated up to December 2019 and copy of same obtained.
6. Tax and VAT payables were timely deposited.
7. Attendance register and salary sheet was verified.

Specific Issues & Actions

Issue identified	Actions to be taken
Limited financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop projects in GCA
Less women targeted activities to enhance social and economic empowerment of women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate Gender Responsive Budget; target on conservation leadership program and engaging more women and marginalized in conservation. • Promoting alternative livelihood opportunities for women's social and economic empowerment.

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Community dissatisfaction because of human wildlife conflict (HWC).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness program for minimizing HWC and more incentives to be provided.
Less knowledge on tourism promotion in local levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardization of tourism services and focuses on capacity building of locals. • Tourism campaign to promote GCA as a best valued-destination.

Additional Note

The result of the SWOT analysis is provided in Annex I

Annex 1:

Strength	Weakness	Opportunities	Threat
Dedicated, multi-tasking and quality staff	Only one permanent staff. Overall limited staffing for GCA. More staff are on daily wage basis	More job opportunities can be created and staff can be hired for effective implementation of the programme	Staff turnover rate is high, GCA geography and road network is too risky for staff to travel on motorbike
NTNC has the legal status to manage GCA	No GCA regulations, not updated CA regulation available yet	There is opportunity to develop conservation friendly and widely accepted CA regulation	Illegal and unplanned infrastructure development for e.g. rural road network due to lack of CA regulation
Local communities are friendly and supportive if they are treated well	Due to lack of proper awareness, it seems less community ownership on conservation related work	Independent CAMC- because of revenue collected from NTFP, hydro power and other local forestry products	Implementation of conservation rules and regulations restrict local communities to direct access on natural resources which makes them feel against GCA
GCAP implements integrated conservation and development programs	Limited financial resource to implement integrated program effectively	More funding can be sought weighting proposals and leveraging funding from rural municipalities	There is more demand for infrastructure development related work rather than pure conservation related work

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Transparent working style of NTNC and GCAP	Less transparency about GCAP program and budget properly	Opportunity of public hearing to make all program and budget more transparent	Communities who receive little resource may raise concern always
Limited budget, optimum delivery	Less human resource for project development, No Program Officer, Accountant in field offices	IGA promotion through NTFP based industry (Satuwa)	Smuggling of forest products
Programme implementation through CAMC	Limited information center and check post	Hydro power-PES	Wildlife injury, death because of hydro power
Strong community Network	Difficulty in CAMCs formation-because of not updated CA regulations	Collaboration with different stakeholders- tourism board, conservation partners, TAN	Conflict with local government (law enforcement related to natural resource use and extraction)