

1. Background

Albania Forestry Project, founded by Albania Government, World Bank, Italian Government and other donors has three principal objectives:

- restore degraded State-owned forest and pasture areas and promote their sustainable use;
- promote the conservation of natural forest ecosystems; and
- take the initial steps in the transition of the forestry/pasture sector to a market economy, separating commercial from regulatory functions and establishing mechanisms for self-financing of the commercial activities.

The project has supported institutional and policy reforms of Albania's forest and pasture sector and provide resources for investments in the five components described below.

1. Institutional Development, including (i) reorganization and strengthening of DGFP by decentralizing its management structure to the prefecture level, developing capacity to manage its new roles in communal forest/ pasture and general pasture administration, and introducing skills required for operating in a market economy; (ii) support for training, education and research in forestry and pastures; (iii) project management; (iv) project environmental management; and (v) technical assistance.

2. Improved State Forest Management, including: (i) strengthening the capacity of field services to manage and protect State forests; (ii) resuming forest management planning; (iii) reforestation of sensitive areas; (iv) pre-commercial thinnings; and (v) forest protection and pest monitoring.

3. Forest Roads Rehabilitation and Maintenance, involving the rehabilitation and subsequent maintenance of 350 km of degraded existing forest roads.

4. Management of Communal Forest and Pasture Areas involving: (i) the implementation of a pilot project in three communes; (ii) development of improved management plans for forests and pastures in 27 additional communes; (iii) funding of selected communal investment projects; and (iv) establishment of a data base on communally managed forests and pastures.

5. Protected Areas Management, involving (i) the strengthening and improvement of the DGFP's capability to manage protected areas in an environmentally sustainable manner; and (ii) the development of a pilot management plan for Lura National Park in order to develop a sustainable model and framework for protected areas management and biodiversity protection.

In the framework of the Albania Forestry Project, Management of Communal Forest and Pasture Areas (MCFPA) is the only component that is dealing with Community Driven Development. The main achievements and lessons learned during the implementation of Communal Forest and Pasture Management Programme are described below.

Achievements and lessons learned during the implementation of Communal Forest and Pasture Management Programme

The Communal Forests and Pasture Management programme (CFPMp) has two main objectives:

i. to rehabilitate and increase the productivity of silvo-pastoral areas close to villages and communities in order to meet the fuel wood requirements of the local population as well as the fodder requirements for their livestock. In relation to this objective, the component also aims at developing the sustainable use of non-wood forest products for additional income generation and supporting the protection and restoration of natural ecosystems in these areas, in order to enhance rural landscape and preserve biodiversity.

ii. to initiate and develop communal management of these areas through the active participation of the users, with a clear allocation of the resource base to local beneficiaries, in order to achieve sustainable management of the most degraded pastures and forests of Albania. ***In relation to this second objective, the component also aims at strengthening the capacity of local governments to manage natural resources.***

The philosophy of the transfer of State forests and pastures to the communes is a recognition of the needs of forests products and services by the local population and their rights on their use. In addition, the transfer is realized to the communes, which then conclude agreements with the village or individual (family) users. This is another achievement as it represents an empowerment of the local population and structures, thus is part of a decentralization process.

The methodology of CFPMP associated with the transfer lies on two major aspects:

1. The organization of the implementing structure (Forestry Village Commissions, Forest Users Associations, DFS communal forestry specialist, and Directorate for Communal Forests and Pastures and Extension Services),
2. The development and implementation of communal forests and pastures management plans.

The management plans developed by the CFPMP are a proper tool to implement this "plan - act - reflect - learn" approach. Not only per se the management plans are a tool for a "plan – implement – monitor" cycle. They have the particularity to bring together very different actors: the forestry service and local government, at all levels, the NGOs (FUAs) and private foresters, as well as the village institutions and individuals (families). The management plans could be used for developing a forum and debate on communal forestry (strategy), raising the awareness of possibilities (rights), and limitations (obligations) bound to their management. Nevertheless, in respect of forestry, introducing the concept of a "plan - act - reflect - learn" cycle is a long term activity as long as the forest cycle.

Good result have been obtained though in the short period, people and villages who started earlier in the rehabilitation process in protecting the forest are seeing the results and are proud that other villages are asking them for their advice. The limitation in the local resources mentioned earlier do not allow drastic changes in attitudes if they are not supported from outside.

The organization at village level of the local population introduces the management of the forest at the level of the users themselves. For the time being more in terms of delimiting the boundaries, appointing the users and defining the uses as well as implementing the protection and improvement measures represents the real works for planning the future development of communal forests. Community driven development in communal forests play also an important role in managing and resolving the conflicts where they occur, thus on a more sustainable way.

The CFPMP is pioneer in communal forestry as it developed the instruments and applied them to carry out the transfer of state forests and pastures to users. The proposed methodology has proven to be adapted to the Programme purpose and the objectives set up at the beginning were realistic: transferring the forests and pastures to 30 communes with the establishment of users' organizations and the corresponding management plans. Today, the

Programme is working in 120 communes from the 30 initial ones and the implementation of the management plan have been raised to 102 several communes. The Table No.1 gave the summary of CFPMP Investment during the project time. This increase in number of communes covered by the Programme was possible thanks to the re-allocation of funds.

Tab. No 1. Summary on CFPMP Investment

No	Year	No of Komunas involved	No of FUA involved	Investment (US\$)
1	1996-1998	11	12	183,000
2	1999	27	28	303,000
3	2000	55	59	516,000
4	2001	90	94	1,555,553
	TOTAL	-	-	2,558,158

The transfer of forests in the philosophy of the CFPMP is not just to return forest to users, but to give back the forest management responsibility to the people who live there. The process is long and not a simple transfer of a forest and pasture area "in use" to the Communes / villages, it is the process of the transfer of State competence and responsibilities (forestry service) to the local government (Communes) and the community (villagers).

It is a decentralization process.

This is thus a process that does not stop at the formal transfer of forests and pastures in use to the community; on the contrary, it lays the foundation for the start of the management of the forests through the development and implementation of management plans by local structures. This promotes a sustainable decentralized management of the natural resources through the participatory involvement of the community. **Therefore, CFPMP is not just a method for communal forest management, but it is also part of the local empowerment and capacity-building processes.**

2. Communal Forests Component

The main objectives of Communal forests Project are: to achieve a sustainable increase in the productivity of forest and pasture areas and to empower local governments.

Procedure of communal forest project implementation has been known to all stakeholders and involved parties such as : Directorate General of Forestry and Pastures, Forestry District Services, Communes, Forestry and Pastures Users Associations, (FUAs). Procedure involves: (1) establishment of FUAs, (2) designing of forestry management plans, (3) implementation of forestry management plans, (4) definition of communes for participation into component, (5) assurance that ideas and thoughts expressed by community are considered, etc.

Criteria for transparency, in the case of the communal forestry, are: (1) being *consistent* to new information and knowledge, investments, (2) *delivery of identical information* (about procedures) to all stakeholders and interested parties, (3) *monitoring and evaluation of investments* that are implemented, (4) control of activities and *communication of results to stakeholders*, (5) *reduction of delays*, implementation of forestry management plan according to timeframe.

Transparency has been required to each stage of management plans.

Communal Forests are transferred from central government to communal management level with the view that local government plays main role in management of natural resources (i.e., forests and pastures). Before agriculture reform, dated 1946, communal forests were of 1% of overall forest and pasture area.

Recently Communal Forests were introduced as an option in years 1994-1995, within the Forestry Project framework, firstly in pilot area of "Tregan", "Kajan" and "Gjinar" Communes, Elbasan district. By that time, required infrastructure started to be established for communal forests and pastures such as : forests and pastures users associations (FUA), commission for each commune and designing of communal forests and pastures management plans.

First FUA was established in the commune of "Gjinar".

FUAs were created as part of indispensable infrastructure for development of communal forests component. Their founding ensures community participation for pasture and forests management. Their role is to ensure a good management of forests and pastures, through community participation.

Other actors that operate altogether with FUAs are District Forests Services (DFS), and Communes. DFS are involved into monitoring and advising related to technical aspects of forests and pastures management plans.

Communes play a special role in definition of users groups, support of FUAs in the course of forests and pastures management plan implementation, etc.

Rights of members (of FUAs) are: election of FUAs leaders (commission), review of FUAs registers and annual accounts, participation in activities organized by FUA, etc., while responsibilities of members are related to law enforcement and obeying to FUA decisions, providing of information to selected commissions of FUAs, etc.

Participation in communal forests alternative shows that it is an acceptable option from communes and community. Through this opportunity, members of associations can express easily their interests, doubts, problems and possibility for the use of forests and pastures.

Steps of involvement of a commune into communal forest component are:

1. Community is introduced with communal forest alternative, contract signed, between commune and DFS. Forest and pasture are identified; each user gets registered (for its forests and pastures in use).

2. Designing of users' land use boundaries, in commune and village level. Commune and FUAs start procedure of transfer, each user is being given forest or pasture land, in parcel and sub-parcel level.

3. Approval of communal forest map, after forest and pasture land for each user has been defined, procedure of tender starts, contractor forester private that will undertake forests and pasture management plan is selected, management plan gets started, fieldwork starts (i.e., data collection in field, afterwards, working out of data and producing maps, reporting and preparation of management plan to be submitted).

4. Village decides who is to be the user, selection of users, they will be of tribe basis, family or individual level, and commune undertakes user's selection procedure in close cooperation with FUA.

5. Data collection for management plan: private forestry contractors conduct designing of management plan and data collection on site . Any divergence has been resolved after tender procedure has been closed. Tender process usually is carried out according to the World Bank standards. Contracts for forest activities are given to private through a bidding procedure. Technical specifications are prepared from DFS, which is responsible also for preparation of ToR and evaluation of offers to select winner. Agreement is signed from DFS, which in turn manages the contract. Private contractors employ local farmers in order to implement activities in forestry. Training and supervision activities are responsibility of private contractors. The latter has to ensure work quality according to standards that are specified in respective manual of Directorate General of Forests and Pastures (DGFP) and the specified contract (source: report "Effects of Albania Forestry Project on Poverty Reduction", 2000)

6. Designing of forestry management plan – draft;

7. Approval of forestry management plan, this plan is approved by the head of commune;

8. Management plan is approved by Commune and DFS;

9. DFS and commune make agreement for transfer of forests to commune, this agreement is transferred to DGFP to be approved; agreement is signed;

10. Commune signs the contracts for transfer of forests and pastures to community, "users"

11. User registration.

3. Turning moments of progress of the Communal Forest component

Three communes of pilot area of Elbasan district have been: *Kajan*, *Grekan* and *Tregan*. All three communes were successful. *Grekan* is placed in the plain of Dumrea, well known for its oak forests. This forest has been over used for years, (before years of '90), while after '90, forests were overgrazed (especially by goats) and other damaging activities. When communal forests were introduced investments like erosion control, reforestation, afforestation, forest improvement activities were financed.

In year 1996, there were 6 communes involved into Forestry Project, Diber, Elbasan and Mat Districts.

During the midterm evaluation, good progress of the component showed and made certain allocation of more funds to communal component. This was the second positive moment for the component. Reallocation of funds to the component led other communes to be involved newly. Communes from south of the country were involved into the component, year 2000. Investments in these communes were mainly related to pasture improvements.

In the end of year 2002, number of communes reach to over 100.

In year 1999, during the midterm evaluation of the project, progress of the component justified the significant allocation of budget to the component from original one: from: 2.766 million to 4.819 million dollars. The increase of budget allocation to the component could allow interested communes to get involved into it and be invested in forestry and pasture.

4. Moments of transparency

(Community participation in developing forests and pastures management plan.)

Participatory approach is main methodology of communal forests and pastures. In each phase of management plan development, community participates. The participatory methodology has been conducted similarly to all communes and communities.

In the first phase, community selects commissions and representatives of itself in forest and pasture management issues. Phase two is management plan development. Village's committees gather to identify village's forests and pastures. Committee make discussions for identification of today's and traditional use of forests and pastures. Identification of users is made in several levels such as: village, neighborhood, and family's group level. Identification of forests and pastures land use, defines clearly forests and pastures village's map (private forester contractor digitals this map and makes it part of management plan). Village's boundaries map is signed by village committee and neighboring villages' representatives. It has a strong social benefit because it clears the claims amongst users towards land use.

Since there are several levels of users, each user is allowed to decide by itself the level of use of forests and pastures. It belongs to village/commune commissions to work closely to each user in order to identify areas (plots) used by each user. Hence, each group of users has its own areas for use. Identification of areas or plots for use is carried out in a transparent way and is the same one for each user.

Next phase of management plan includes needs and requirements of users for forests, pastures and agricultural resources. In this stage, FUAs clear out how each user and/or member of FUAs will contribute to forests and pastures activities (proposed into management plan): by participating into forestry works or by contributing financially.

Basically, forests and pastures are to meet users' needs. Though, in first years, it is rather difficult since communal forests are mainly degraded forests. In next phase of the management plan, users express their needs for fuel wood, fodder, grazing areas, etc. Based on their land use analyses priorities of investments are made, in order to realize how much the communal forests and pastures could meet these needs. In case of user placed in steep, mountain areas, closed to degraded forest and overgrazing pasture areas, villages are to make agreements with neighbor for using pastures areas etc. Though, there are cases when these agreements are short-term, or broken up. Needs of each separated user are drawn in a good and same manner for villages and communes.

Studies are conducted and presented to community the priorities of management plan, village forest and pasture map (according to traditional use for each user), activities that are to be done during the course of management plan implementation, degraded forests and eroded areas etc.. Based on findings, committees may propose changes for activities for improvement of forests and pasture. After approval of management plan by committees, other stakeholders may consider management plan for further consideration.

Next phase could be that commune representatives, forest area inspector and management plan working group make an agreement with village to develop management plan as a draft: objectives of village forests according to their function and category of use, map, propose activities for ten year period and investment (where to be made) for three first years are set up with village committees. Draft of management plan is to match with requirements of DFS and DGFP guidelines, thus village committee, commune and working group of management plan, work on compilation of management plan.

Management plan get matched also, with specific requirements and features of commune for forest and pastures areas use. The management plans after this stage goes to DFS for approval, where final revision of communal forest and pasture management plan is made. In this moment, commune and DFS sign the management plan that is transferred to DGFP, Director General for its approval. If there are forest cadastre(land ownership registration) changes proposed from commune, these changes are reflected in this stage. Thus transfer of forests and pasture area is made. Last stage of management plan is compilation of contracts commune-user according to management plan, contract for investments for first three years from PMU, as well as implementation. PMU, DFS and commune are partners of this stage of management plan.

Box 1: Tradional use of communal forests and pastures

Some villages are protecting degraded forest areas. These forests are close to local people' agricultural lands, thus, people are interested to improve and protect these areas.

Communal forests are close to villages. They have been used for a long time from all villages or divided according to each family (still, they were not mentioned as private forests). Forests (under use) were totally identified, also users were as such, and each separate user had its own forest and pasture area for use. Everyone respected others ' rights. Borders of user's areas were defined by using stones or other distinguishable marks. According to the law of year 1923, common (communal) forests have been used to meet local people needs for fuelwood, construction raw material, grazing, fodder, and non-timber forest products. Moreover, a guard was paid by all users to protect the forests.

Traditions of land use after Second World War was transformed. After year 1990, forests and pastures were over used, overexploited, and damaged seriously. Introduction of communal forest and pasture alternative led to acknowledgement of community's rights to use forests and pastures closed to villages, in order to meet the basic needs.

Though, all needs may not be met by using only forests and pastures of commune. The assessment of existing situation, of forests and pastures of commune, of timber for each village and commune, in hilly and mountain land, is to be carried out properly.

How much fuelwood can be produced from forests under use and how much is to be bought in market, how much forest production can be in the future, what can be done with it. Sharing this information amongst users, decision-making process and communication is more straightforward and convenient for all.

5.Transfer of Know –How

Infrastructure: FUAs and management plan of communal forests and pasture contains new elements of knowledge for partners and community as well. Establishment of FUAs requires commitment from users itself for proper use of forest and pasture areas, for protecting forest environment, for participation into process of development of management plan, of management plan implementation activities, respecting of responsibilities and duties of each partner: DFS, Commune and PMU.

Management plans introduce *new elements of information and knowledge* like: concept of sustainability of natural resource use, decentralization process and its aspects, transfer of forests and pastures to commune (that has been strange beforehand), environmental aspects namely erosion control, carrying capacity of forests and pastures areas, livestock management measurements like: replacing goat with sheep or cow, designation of forest and pasture area use according to tradition and nowadays use.

Private forests contractors have gained new knowledge on management plan designing, implementation and considering of social, environmental aspects of it. Since management plan considers strongly community's needs for forest and pasture areas use, this is a very new aspect of plan. Also, private forester contractor is to train workers that take part in forestry works; they are to ensure *required quality of work* based on standards of DGFP guidelines.

Knowledge gained in the communal forestry has been shared also with other countries such as with representatives of forestry sector in Kyrgyzstan, in the end of year 2002. They were introduced to challenges and problems that took place in Albanian Forestry Sector and the way how communal forestry is assisting in facing them. It was shared also the knowledge about roles and responsibilities of local communities in development of the participatory approach to forestry management. It was observed the involvement of the local population in decision – making processes, and acquainted possibilities of local people to increase income generated from communal forests.

Involvement of local people in communal process was the most impressive aspect to the Kyrgyz group.

6.Administration, transparency and accountability

Transfer of forests and pastures from central to communal government, implies delegation of rights and responsibilities to local government.

Administration of central government mainly: DGFP and 36 DFS deals directly with management of state forest and pastures, and PMU (under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food);

Administration of local government: communes (under Ministry of Local Government) that have communal forests and pastures under administration, and non-governmental agencies like FUAs.

According to a survey (that was conducted by a multi-agency working group on effects of forestry project on poverty reduction), Forestry Project has had a positive influence on decision-making process at local governments, village and DFS levels. A great number of households have been positive to existence of FUAs and "...only a small minority of household respondents

claims not to be satisfied with the way the association represents their interests. A similarly small number of households feel that their Association does not have any influence in relevant decision at the DFS level. More than 90% of the participating households are quite satisfied with being members of FUAs. From organization's perspectives, almost all surveyed organizations declared very good collaboration among them..". Over 50% of the members of FUAs have declared they are satisfied being members of association, "...some 38% consider that they are not sufficiently represented by the association and 33% feel that their interests as individuals are being taken into consideration a little only or not at all".

One of interesting of findings (about level of participation in decision-making process in management plan), was related to private forest contractors. They show a high satisfaction level in decision-making process. This "...can be explained by the impact of the Forestry Project, which has introduced very clear and transparent bidding process, that enable a fair and market-driven competition. At the same time the Forestry project has encouraged cooperation between the DFS and the contractors through joint capacity building"

Any private forester contractor is free to take part in bidding competition. Base on specifications and standards, wining contractor is selected. Local people get employed into forestry activities, after being trained. Standards and procedure of bidding are the same for all competitors.

DGFP has prepared guidelines for management plans. Each contractor is to follow instructions of guidelines in preparing management plans. Technically, DFS monitors activities that are implemented.

During the implementation phase of management plan, DGFP, DFS and PMU monitors and evaluates activities done by FUAs. Each specific forest activity as: erosion control (fencing), or thinning have their own technical specifications, that are approved in mini-projects. If specifications are not well respected than, results of monitoring activity are presented chiefly to partners: FUAs, DSHP.

7. New ideas and challenges

Interventions made by the Forestry Project in forestry sector are shown to be investments, improvement of forest and pasture areas, capacity building of local government, FUAs, etc. Social, economical and environmental benefits are many. Most essential benefits are (i)social such as : community participation in decision making and employment opportunities; (ii)economical: income increase due to employment in forestry activities; (iii)environmental benefits are due to forests and pasture areas improvements, and reduction of erosion in upstream and siltation effects in downstream.

FUAs, local government and DFS have received project's funding. Especially, FUAs have been relying almost totally from project's funds, lesser DFS and much less local governments[1].

Despite benefits, current and future management of forests and pastures of commune need update of legal basis like update of laws and regulations; perfection of marketing of non-timber products and services like grazing, fodder, fuel-wood, update of monitoring and evaluation system for communal forestry, an integrated approach to tackle environmental questions of "refused land"[2].

New idea of tackling above-mentioned matters is further organizing of FUAs in higher level of decision-making, i.e. establishment of National Association of FUAs. The latter will increase role of individual FUAs and community in management process of forests and pastures, and undertakes current problems of managing communal forestry. Based on the methodology of participation approach erosion and "refused land" matters may be sorted out.

Box 2: Strengthening of FUAs and establishment of National Association

Establishment of National Association of FUAs has started with those of regional federations in *Kukes, Korça, Dibra* and *Elbasan*. The process has begun recently, and so far community has supported it. Each regional federation has designed its own statute, regulations. Information about establishment of federations has been shared amongst communities in regional level.

Regional federations are established in Kukes, Diber and Korçe; work is in process in Elbasan region.

Box 3: Livestock management

Management of forests and pastures areas has faced the issues of livestock management (this is true for forests and pastures users). Generally speaking, users themselves are aware of conflicts between forests and goats. This is one of main reasons that villages take decisions to replace goats with sheep and/or cows. A part of communal forests and pastures users have economical constrains to do that, and others are unable to "get rid of traditions of goats". It is important that users of forest and pastures of commune may replace goats with sheep and/or cows. On the other hand, it can be predicted how many goats can be managed if carry capacity of forests and pastures area is identified, for overall livestock.

8 Lessons learned and the future

Though Communal Forest component was successful in many aspects, there were challenges and hardships in some others. Not in all cases establishment of FUA was done properly. In the case of *Ulza*, district of Mat, FUA had to be re-established, due to not functioning well. As such, investments could not be done in time, delays and conflicts of interests made the FUA to be dissolved and another one new FUA to be set up.

Quality of work is not always according to standards. This is evident especially in the first year activities, mainly for all communes. After a small set of activities, FUAs and communes are very much more able to manage activities in required quality.

Generally speaking, commues involved into communal forestry are likely to be divided into two groups: Group one: private initiatives are stronger than collective ones and group two: collective initiatives are much sustainable.

In both cases, communities have acknowledged social-economic, environmental benefits. Sometimes, benefits are understood in a short-term period of time and limited long-term benefits or alternatives are foreseen. This is very true in the beginning of the component, while nowadays, communities require financial support for managing forests and pastures, updating of respective legislation and work opportunities.

Yet, there is a need for a more comprehensive awareness work to community for long-term benefits of communal forests, acknowledgement of forest conservation (besides forest production possibilities), for strengthening FUA associations and commitment from community itself to ensure sustainability of the communal forestry.

Option of privatization of forest and pasture land is much attractive to the group *one*, while forest conservation and other environmental friendly activities ate likely to be supported by group *two* of communities.

Based on the needs and requirements of each group, *first* group need to get more knowledge on long-term natural environmental degradation. This is a very essential part of awarness work.

Communities that support environmental friendly activites like: eco-tourism, national parks, sport, regional activities are to be supported by market and economical tools that make environmental benefits alternatives being applied.

Box 4: Role of community and commune in the management of the National Park “Prespa”

National Park of “Prespa” has been established in year 1999. Elevation of area is over 850 m. It is a cross-border park, bordering Albania, Greece and Macedonia.

During designing phase of management plan, community issues have their own importance and considerations.

After M. Qirjo “... administration of park in collaboration with commune administration is designing a strategy for area development. In this aspect, the administration of park has reached some positive results as: (1) reduction of illegal cuttings by inhabitants living in areas near Prespa Park; (2) reduction of uncontrolled grazing; (3) control of forest activities (for improving of forests).

Management of flora and fauna of Lake of Prespa aims to be harmonized with activities of neighboring countries (in Greece and Macedonia)...

Local government plans should undertake forest activities that aim to improve forests conditions, infrastructure, and tourism.... Commune inhabitants are changing attitude to improve income-yield alternatives but harmful to environment.... Thus, livestock has been managing better; livestock structure has been changing so that number of goats is reduced evidently. Forestry Project has priorities towards the Park. There has been allocated funds for supporting park administration. What is most important, in this aspect, is that Project Management Unit has surveyed carefully the Park state and took decision to transfer a part of forests and pastures to commune. Also, it supports community participation in this process and all phases of management plan, assisted in the establishment of FUA, control of forestry activities quality, etc. Philosophy of Forestry Project is: “forest and community close to it will always have intensive relationships and grow together...”

Communal forests are an interesting alternative, despite little knowledge existed before. It has been less known from state and private options. However, community interests were evidently high and competitive to state forests management case. Communal forests are close to villages. People have used them for everyday’s needs (fuelwood, etc.). Altogether with environmental issues of communal forests and pastures areas, the opportunity to tackle these two points was challenging.

A great deal of efforts and investments was done from project, to ensure community participation, establish FUA, create conditions for a good climate of cooperation amongst partners, invest to capacity building of DFS, local government, FUA, deliver information and knowledge to some extent to community, make good investments according to community’ needs, etc.

Future of communal forestry requires sustainability of positive results, yielded so far. Another directions should be strengthening of structures that are responsible for the management of communal forests and pastures; further capacity-building of local governments, FUAs regarding to their roles and responsibilities for the nature resources use.

9. Commual Forest Project Impact on Poverty reduction

The survey explored perception for long-term solutions among the respondents, who mentioned several options, when asked about the most needed support for overcoming the problems of poverty.

"Table 5-26: Main reasons for not choosing emigration (taken by the study conducted on Commual Forest Project Impact on poverty reduction, year 2002).

Reasons	Involved in project	Not involved into project
There are no many possibilities for legal emigration	61%	53%
Can't leave the family alone	53%	51%
Life of emigrant is too difficult	28%	35%
Education of children	5%	13%
Private economy helped to overcome problems	9%	13%
Found support from the project	38%	4%

*Note: respondents did mention more than one factor

As evident from table 5-27, employment (61%) and financial support, including long-term loans, investments, etc. (30%) are considered the most important supports needed. The benefits from FP (forestry project) and the WFP (World Food Program) are considered much needed. At the same time, a large majority of respondents also realizes that such assistance is not a long-term solution for addressing their problems and that other options are needed. Interestingly, many respondents would be willing to borrow money in order to realize their economical potential. That fact, that only 5% of respondents consider external support necessary to reduce other risk factors (i.e. infrastructure, health, etc.), indicates their willingness to solve these problems themselves, if given a chance. These responses are very revealing and can serve as important indicators for policy and strategic purposes. They show that the people want to work and attain an economical position, which would enable them to break the vicious of poverty.

Table 5-27: kind of support wanted by community to solve their problems

The required support proposed by population	Proportion
Employment	61%
Financial support (loans, investments, etc.)	30%
Continuity of FP and food assistance	8%

Other* like:

Infrastructure

Emigration

Health centers

Better policies to support local products 5%

Order and safety

Support from younger members of family, etc.

*Note: some times more than one support has been mentioned.

The responses from organizations regarding the impact of FP on reducing some of the risk factors provide some evidence that the project has actually achieved the targets. The most positive aspects are the employment opportunities (73%) and the process of decentralization (17%) that was promoted by the FP. Technical assistance (4%), food assistance (4%) and the improved information/communication (1%) are other factors mentioned. The achievements of the FP in actually improving the conditions of the forest and pasture resources has not been mentioned, although it is recognized that opportunities for the future can ultimately only be provided through sustainable resource management..

[1] According to "Effects of Forestry Project to Reduction Poverty", forestry project contribution to economical development of local government is of 95%, DFS is 69%, FUAs, 100%, private contractors, 95%.

[2] "Refused land" has been considered agricultural land that has been abandoned due to hard current environmental conditions and lack of claims by local people to them. These lands are mainly eroded or abandoned.