

# Livelihood and Common-Pool Resources

A Study of Thini Village, Mustang, Trans-Himalayan  
Region of Nepal



*Dilli Prasad Poudel*



Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the Master of Philosophy (M. Phil.) Degree in  
**Resources and Human Adaptations**

Department of Geography  
University of Bergen, Norway

May 2008

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## Abstract

*Agriculture and livestock rearing are the major livelihood earning activities of many people of Trans-Himalayan villages of Nepal, which are not possible without relying on the availability of and the accessibility to Common-Pool Resources (CPRs) such as forest, water and pastureland. Focusing on Thini village, Mustang district of Nepal's Trans-Himalaya, this study aims to explore the livelihood situations of the villagers, which set a main objective as "how do villagers sustain their livelihood in a situation of formally regulated CPRs. It further dismantles as (a) what are the major earning sources of the villagers? (b) How do villagers' major earning sources relate and rely on the CPRs? And (c) how do villagers perceive the existence of Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) and its regulation of the CPRs? Getting insights primarily from qualitative research methodology, interview, observation, field conversation and photo elucidating techniques were applied to collect primary information.*

*Eric R. Wolf's (1966) concepts of funds i.e. fund of reproduction, fund of rent and fund of ceremonial have found suitable while analyzing the livelihood of the villagers. He says that a peasant (a rural cultivator) is not evolving merely to produce grains to sustain his and his family's livelihood in a strict biological sense (fund of reproduction) but he must also set aside time for several social as well as religious practices as a part of his and his family's survival (fund of ceremonial). Similarly, a peasant must earn to pay taxes to the state or government, and if a peasant does not own the land, must pay rent to the landowner (fund of rent). Likewise, Tor H. Aase's (1998) local dialectic approach has been applied to see the changes in a community or society over space and time. He believes that societal changes take place interacting between social organization (practice, behaviour), social structure (norms, rules) and culture (meaning) over space and time in a dialectical process. Some theories related to Common-Pool Resources (CPRs) have also been reviewed and applied in the present study.*

*Though agriculture is practiced by all the villagers, most villagers lack sufficient agriculture production, which they fulfil by rearing livestock, running tavern, selling vegetable, apple, dehydrated apple, locally made alcohol (raksi), working as a wage labourer, and a mule driver. Very few villagers are earning from migration. Though the region is famous for tourism, Thini villagers lack much direct benefit from it.*

*Agriculture and livestock are the major earning sources of the villagers while making their living, which are not possible without the availability of and the accessibility to the CPRs. Villagers need forest for pastureland and fodder for their livestock, firewood for their household use, humus, litter, and compost for the agriculture. Some villagers collect tree leaves to construct the roof of their house. Villagers need water for irrigation and drinking purposes. Thus, it is found that villagers are absolutely relying on CPRs for their agriculture and livestock activities.*

*However, at present, the CPRs are being managed by Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC), which is formed by ACAP – a conservation-cum-development project, established in 1993 in Jomsom - which previously were being managed by villagers themselves. Since the management of CPRs has changed, there are confrontations between villagers and the project. Even though ACAP has done some important development and awareness programme such as construction of trail, water reservoir, drinking water pipe distribution, help to construct fences for the agriculture fields; villagers' are not satisfied with ACAP/CAMC mainly because it does not distribute poorji (a permission letter to cut the timber from the forest) in time.*

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## List of Abbreviations

ACAP:	Annapurna Conservation Area Project
BS:	<i>Bikram Sambat</i>
CAMA:	Conservation Area Management Act
CAMC:	Conservation Area Management Committee
CBS:	Central Bureau of Statistic
CPR:	Common Pool Resource
CBNRM:	Community Based Natural Resource Management
DDC:	District Development Committee
Dr.:	Doctor
DVD:	Digital Video Disk
GS:	Gaun Samiti
HKH:	Hindu-Kush Himalaya
ICDP:	Integrated Conservation and Development Programme
ICIMOD:	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
masl:	Meter above sea level
ml:	Millilitre
mm:	Millimetre
NB:	written before a piece of important information to make readers notice it
NR:	Natural Resource
NRs:	Nepali Rupees
NTFP:	Non-Timber Forest Product
NTNC:	National Trust for Nature Conservation
Prof.:	Professor
Rs:	Rupees
TV:	Television
UiB:	Universitas i Bergensis (University of Bergen)
USA:	United States of America
VDC:	Village Development Committee

## Glossary

***NB: It is strongly recommended to see Appendix IV for more glossaries, where I have accumulated many words of villagers' day-to-day language during the fieldwork.***

- Aama:* Mother
- Bahidar:* Secretary who keeps all the records of the villagers, such as permanent and temporary residence of Thini, the decisions on rewards and punishment made by the committee and the programmes already done and to be done by the committee.
- Ban Samiti:* Villagers say *ban samiti* (in Nepali language) for Conservation Area Management Committee or CAMC, which is formed by ACAP
- Bhangdi:* A house constructed with wood, stone and soil
- Bhar:* Apple plantation field of Thini
- Bhari:* Load
- Bhatti:* Tavern
- Bikram Sambat (BS):* BS is Nepal's official year for public and private purposes: government offices, schools and other private day-to-day activities. Although, English year AD is also used interchangeably in Nepal but it has not been accepted as official count of year yet. In addition, the *Bikram Sambat* is about 56 years, 8 months and 16 days elder than the Christian Calendar Anno Domini (AD).
- Brahman:* So- called upper caste of the village
- Chhowa/Katuwal:* Messenger who also looks after the management of irrigation
- Dai:* Elder brother
- Damai:* So-called lowest caste of the village
- Dashain:* A famous Hindu Festival celebrated in October or November in Nepal. This festival is also known as *Durga Pooja*
- Dharo:* Traditional male group of Thini village
- Didi:* Elder sister (also used to call with respect to the elder woman than the speaker)
- Dyang:* Soil ridge
- Gaun Samiti (GS):* Traditional local level committee of the village
- Ghyanga:* A house constructed with wood and soil
- Gomba:* Buddhist monastery
- Goth:* A shed to keep the domestic animals or a corral
- Himal:* Mountain
- Kami:* So-called lowest caste of the village

<i>Karu:</i>	A type of grain produced in Thini. It looks like barley
<i>Khampa:</i>	Tibetan freedom fighter
<i>Khopen:</i>	Leader of the <i>Chhowas</i>
<i>Kot Ghar:</i>	Arsenal
<i>Lama:</i>	Buddhist monk
<i>Le:</i>	Crops cultivation field of Thini
<i>Lobas:</i>	People from upper Mustang of Nepal
<i>Mana:</i>	Approximatly half kg, however its measurement varies in Nepal
<i>Muktinath:</i>	A famous Hindu temple located in Muktinath of Mustang district
<i>Nak:</i>	Female yak
<i>Paisa:</i>	A lowest unit of Nepali currency, i.e. Nepali Rupee. A 100 <i>paisas</i> are equivalent to 1 Nepali Rupee. 1 US doller = 64-65 NRs during fieldwork.
<i>Panch Gaun:</i>	Traditional categorization of Thakali villages in Mustang; <i>Panch Gaun</i> includes Thini, Syang, Mapra, Chhairo and Chimang
<i>Poorji:</i>	a permission letter, which allows a person to cut timber from the forest, but it also limits how much cubic feet of timber one can get and till when one has to use it
<i>Pathi:</i>	A <i>pathi</i> is equivalent to 3.4-4.0 kg, depends on things, such as grain, flour or others
<i>Raksi:</i>	Locally produced alcohol which is made by locally produced grains such as barley and <i>Karu</i>
<i>Ropani:</i>	Land measuring 5476 square feet. Locally, total number of fields where 10 <i>pathis</i> of seed can be sowed (5-10 <i>les</i> ), is considered as a <i>ropani</i> land
<i>Sasto pasal:</i>	Cheap shop
<i>Satu:</i>	Flour of parched <i>karu</i> or other types of grains
<i>Sano Phajan:</i>	Smaller clan (family)
<i>Thuimi:</i>	Chief or headman of the village and village committee ( <i>gaun samiti</i> )
<i>Thulo Phajan:</i>	Bigger/larger clan (family)
<i>Tika:</i>	The mixture of vermilion powders (red and yellow), rice and curd, which place on the forehead during the most important Hindu festival <i>Dashain</i> that usually falls in October
<i>Torma:</i>	<i>Torma</i> is an offering cake in the Buddhist monastery. They symbolize the food offering. Originally made of dough (roasted <i>karu</i> or barley flour is used) and also sculpted from butter, they have evolved into elaborately decorated objects (In: <a href="http://www.khandro.net/ritual_tormas.htm">http://www.khandro.net/ritual_tormas.htm</a> ).
<i>Uiimen:</i>	Traditional female group of Thini village

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background Introduction

About three-quarters of the world's 662 million mountain dwellers live in rural areas and depend mainly on small-scale farming (Dach et al., 2006: 4). About 70 per cent of the population of South Asia rely on agriculture and natural resources as their major sources of earning livelihood (<http://www.odi.org.uk/plag/PROJECTS/livelihoodoptions.htm>). Agriculture in Himalayan countries like Nepal, China, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh rely heavily on mountain discharge of water (Aase, 2007a: 1). Thus, in most Himalayan countries natural resources such as forest, water and pastureland, which can be termed as “common-pool resources” (henceforth CPRs) play a vital role to sustain the livelihood of the rural people. In the Trans-Himalayan villages of Nepal, agriculture and livestock rearing are the major sources of earning livelihood. Moreover, villagers also find other sources of income such as selling firewood, grass and fodder, medicinal plants, fruits for their livelihood (Banskota, 2005: 4). Such CPRs, thus, are very important to the villagers as they are the sources of agriculture, livestock, water, firewood, timber, medicinal plants, fruits and other kinds of natural products, and indeed it has been incorporated values in their culture and tradition (Messerschmidt, 1986; Bernbaum, 2006). The present study is about how the people of a Trans-Himalayan village, Thini in Mustang district of Nepal- maintain and sustain their livelihood.

Scherr et al. (2003: 5) say that about two thirds people in developing countries live in so-called “marginal agriculture lands” (such as upland watersheds) where forestry, tree crops and agro-forestry are important land uses and which are also ecologically more suitable than any annual single crop. In addition, CPRs not only protect million of rural people's livelihoods as subsistence safety net but also secure the sources of cash income and employment (Sunderlin, Angelsen and Wunder, 2003: cited in Ibid, p. 6). For instance, Bennet (2000; cited in Ibid) explicitly mentions that the indigenous groups of West Africa receive 25 percent of protein requirements from bushmeat alone. Thus, the use of CPRs is very important in making a living of mountain people and it has long been an integral component of household economic pursuits (Ellis & Allison, 2004: 10).

Ellis et al. (Ibid: 9) further say that CPRs-dependent livelihoods are often associated with ethnic minorities and indigenous groups and such groups are often found in the areas of environmental or biodiversity conservation interest. Presently, the CPRs of Mustang have also been managed by a conservation-cum-development project. Considering that the CPRs are degrading and should be protected for sustainable rural households' livelihood. Since the last decade (or more), the management of such resources has been transferred from the government to community based

management (development project + local community), popularly known as Community-Based Natural Resource Management. Transferring management from state to village level may open more access and control over the CPRs to the villagers. However, the notion of strict conservationist approach and the wisdom of involving local people in resource management are increasingly, and emotionally, debatable (Spinnage 1996, 1998; Ghimire and Pimbert, 1997; cited in Abbot et al, 2001: 1115). This finally results in illegal encroachment into the CPRs and illegal and unsustainable harvesting of resources by the locals for their livelihood (Khanal, 2007: 20).

## **1.2 Putting the Problem in Context**

Ellis and Allison (2004: 1) say the “*the term livelihood attempts to capture not just what people do in order to make a living, but the resources that provide them with the capability to build a satisfactory living, the risk factors that they must consider in managing their resources, and the institutional and policy context that either helps or hinders them in their pursuit of a viable or improving living.*” The definition explicitly denotes the importance of resources to the rural livelihood for making a better living. But the connoted meaning of the definition is also the needs to capture or control the resources for better living standard of the individuals or households (if there is no proper and managed access to CPRs) which implicitly force villagers to try to accrue resources for better household livelihood.

Because of its extreme geo-climatic variation, the Geography of Mustang does not provide very favourable condition for making a living for the villagers. Geographically its most parts are located in the Trans-Himalayan region (between Tibetan plateau and Himalayan Mountain) of Nepal where little monsoon rainfall occurs. The region is also described as “one of the most rigid climatic barriers (because of two high mountains namely Dhaulagiri of 8167 and Annapurna of 8091 masl) in the world” (Nelson et al., 1980: cited in Pyers, 1985: 108). That is why it is known as rain shadow area of Nepal, which receives less than 400 mm (even 250 mm) of rainfall (Haffner, 2000). Because of such climatic and geographic variation of Trans-Himalaya, local farmers have adopted different risk mitigating strategies for the livelihood such as delay cropping, multiple cropping and sending one of household member outside on labour migration (Aase and Vetaas, 2006). Despite agriculture as a major source of earning their livelihoods, rearing livestock also plays a vital role for them. Rearing animals is not only to support subsistence agriculture but also to earn cash income (by sending the mules to carry the loads, sheep for meat and wool). How far is it true in the context of Thini village and its people in order to make a living? This will be analyzed in the present study.

Even if Thongmanivong and Fujita (2006) say that the rural livelihood in upland areas, which were initially based on subsistence agriculture production, now rely more on market activities,

previous studies regarding the people of Trans-Himalaya show that the villagers' main sources of livelihood rely on agriculture and livestock rearing yet (Aase et al, 2006, Negi, 2007). Other livelihood earning activities (such as market activities) of the Trans- Himalayan villagers are additional or supportive for them. However, both activities, i.e. agriculture and livestock, are impossible without relying on the CPRs. Is it true in the case of Thini village? Do their major livelihood earning activities still relate and rely on the CPRs? The present study will also try to find the answer of this question.

Thini is located in Thak Khola<sup>1</sup> region of Nepal. The villagers of Thini are popularly known as Thakali – a mountain community of Nepal. They are also known as agro-pastoral and trading people of Nepal (Bista, 1972; Messerschmidt, 1982; Vinding, 1998). Previous studies show that these earning sources of the villagers are directly or indirectly based on natural resources or CPRs (Pyers, 1985, Messerschmidt, 1986; Vinding, 1998). At present, the common-pool resources (CPRs) of Thini<sup>2</sup> are under a conservation-cum-development project, named Annapurna Conservation Area Project (henceforth ACAP) which was initiated in 1993<sup>3</sup> in Jomsom, the capital of Mustang, with the double objectives, (a) to conserve the natural resources of the region and (b) to improve the livelihoods of local people. Thus, it is possible that changes in access conditions can affect villagers' livelihood, as can changes in the conditions of resources (Dev et al. 2003: 64).

Thus, the natural resources such as forest and pastureland, which were customarily used by local villagers now it should be used by respecting the rules and regulations of Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC) of Jomsom, which is formed by ACAP. Dev et al. (Ibid: 68) further say that changes in forest management resources have often led to changes in livelihood strategies of individuals and households, which are cumulative and mutually reinforcing. Because there are many households, especially the poorer ones, have been forced to have reduced access to benefits from forests (Neupane 2000, Malla 2000, Paudel 1999, Maharjan 1998; cited in Neupane 2003: 55). Therefore, the contextual changes may bring some changes in the pursuits of earning livelihood of the local people. Although the reconciliation of local people with development and conservation project has been accepted, yet conflicts between conservationist and the local people are seen in Nepal (Sharma 1991; Heinen 1993; Nepal & Weber 1993; Mehta

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<sup>1</sup>Thak Khola is the valley elongated from Ghasa village in South to the Jomsom (districts headquarter of Mustang district) in North of Nepal (more on next chapter).

<sup>2</sup> The present study considered forest, water and pastureland as Common-Pool Resources (CPRs) of Thini.

<sup>3</sup>The ACAP itself was established in 1986 but in lower region of Mustang District of Nepal, it was started since 1993. Thini village of Jomsom Village Development Committee (Jomsom VDC) of Mustang comes under 'lower Mustang region' where ACAP has established Jomsom Unit Conservation Office (Jomsom UCO) as a branch of ACAP.



1996: cited in Heinen 1999). In this context, how do Thini villagers perceive ACAP? The present study will also seek to answer this question.

Considering the contexts as mentioned above, the research objectives of the present study can be formulated as a set of research question as follows;

### Main research question

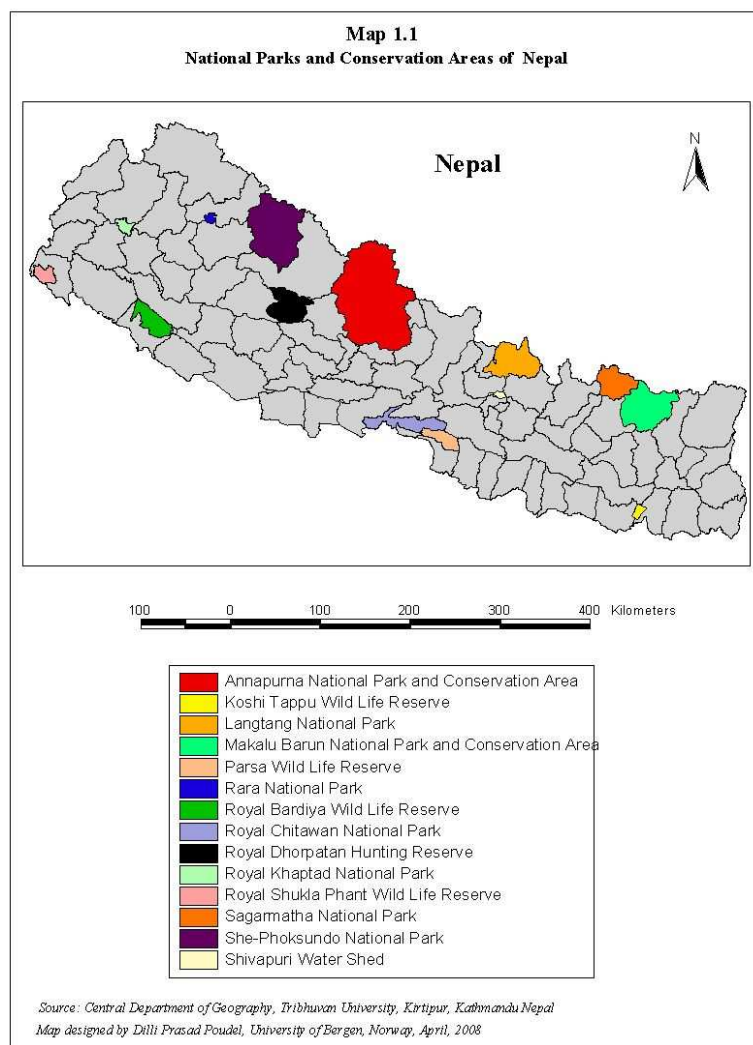
*How do villagers sustain their livelihoods in a situation of formally regulated Common-Pool Resources (CPRs)?*

### Sub research questions

1. *What are the major earning sources of the villagers?*
2. *How do villagers' major earning sources relate and rely on the CPRs?*
3. *How do villagers perceive the existence of Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) and its regulation of the CPRs?*

## 1.3 Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP)

The King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation that recently renamed as National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) has launched ACAP in 1986. ACAP is the first and largest conservation area of Nepal, which covers 7629 sq. km. (map 1.1). The conservation area adopted a multiple land use principle of resource management that tries to combine environmental protection with sustainable community development (<http://www.South-asia.com/Kingmah/tonproj.htm> #1). The grassroots philosophy of ACAP is to encourage local



people in all aspects of conservation and development.

ACAP is spread in 5 districts (Kaski, Myagdi, Parbat, Manang and Mustang) and 55 Village Development Committees (VDCs) of Western Development Region of Nepal. ACAP is divided into seven Unit Conservation Offices (UCOs) namely Jomsom, Manang and Lho Mustang in North of ACAP and Bhujung, Lwang, Sikles and Ghandruk in South of ACAP (Ibid). Thini, the study area of the present study lies within Jomsom UCO of ACAP. Likewise, ACAP has also formed a local level community, which is known as Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC) in each VDCs to manage the CPRs and to launch the development program in village level.

The land surface of ACAP ranges from 450 masl to 8091 masl (Annapurna Mountain). It is rich in culture, tradition and physical diversity. High mountains and deep valleys surround the region, thus, the region is very famous for biological diversity (Allard 1995: cited in Heinen et. al 1999). The region is also home to 1,226 species of plants, 38 species of orchids, 9 species of Rhododendrons, 101 species of mammals, 478 species of birds, 39 species reptiles and 22 species of amphibians (<http://www.South-asia.com/dnpwc/other-national-parks/annapurna.htm>). It is also a very famous tourist destination of Nepal, where more than 50,000 tourists visit annually (Müller-Böker et.al, 2000).

#### **1.4 Raison d'être of the Study**

The Himalayan region is generally perceived as very fragile in terms of environmental degradation, and various researches have been conducted concerning this matter (Ives, 2004). During seventies and eighties, there were some theories, which predicted that there would be acute environmental problem in the future because of non-sustainable use of forest, land, water and high population growth in the Himalaya (Ibid). Ives named them as “*The Theory of Himalayan Environmental Degradation*” (Ives, 1984, 1986; cited in Ibid: 3). However, later these theories and myths are dismantled by various researches by concluding that the processes behind the Himalayan Environment Degradation are more complex than it was previously assumed (Ibid).

The present study, supporting Ives, considers that the CPRs are vital sources for the livelihood of Himalayan people, focusing on Thini village, Mustang district, Trans-Himalaya of Nepal. Moreover, present study also believes that the local people have their own tradition and institutions to manage such resources in a sustainable way for the fulfilment of their livelihood requirements. However, empirical research that aims to explore their reliance on the CPRs in the

present context is lacking. Thus, the present study tries to fulfil this gap. In addition, it tries to add one more brick in supporting the “*Dismantled theory of Himalayan Mountain Degradation*”.

Various studies regarding Mustang in general and Lower Mustang in particular were taken during seventies, eighties and nineties such as Bista, 1972, Messerschmidt, 1982, and Vinding, 1998. But none of the studies particularly focuses on Thini village and its people’s livelihood, though Thini village considered as a main Thakali village and a famous Thakali kingdom in the region in the past time (see the next chapter). In this situation, thus, present study will try to analyze contemporary livelihood activities of the region in general and of the Thini village and its people in particular. In this sense, present study may be a valuable asset for the local governance while making a plan and policy of the region.

### **1.5 Organization of the Study**

Considering the contexts of the present study area and the above research questions, this thesis is divided into nine chapters. This is the end of the first chapter, while second chapter gives the socio-geographical introduction of the study area. Third chapter narrates the tools and techniques applied and adopted in order to collect the required data from the field. The chapter also describes how I managed to get back-stage of respondents’ society, and how I shaped my position and established the status in their society. Fourth chapter is designed to put the related theories and concepts used in the present thesis. Henceforth, the chapter heads to analyze the empirical data and to answer the questions designed for the present study. Fifth chapter analyzes the embedded institutions of the study village, some vital emic categories, and variation in CPRs accessibility. In addition, it also includes the brief introduction of traditional and modern CPRs management systems. Sixth chapter, based on fifth chapter, analyzes the livelihood activities of the villagers, which includes major subsistence strategies of the villagers, the condition and context for the need of the cash income for the villagers, and their ways to accumulate cash income in the pursuit of their livelihood. Seventh chapter analyzes the relation with and reliance of villagers’ major livelihood activities on the CPRs. Eighth chapter seeks the villagers’ perceptions regarding the existence of ACAP in their locality. Finally, the ninth chapter is divided into three sections, the first section concludes the entire thesis in a form of synthesis, the second section revisits the theories and concepts applied in the present research with its findings, and finally the last section indicates the future trends.

## 2. Study Area

### 2.1 Introduction

Presenting a location map of the study area in the next page, this chapter introduces the socio-geographical background of the study area. It introduces the Thakali ethnic community of Nepal Himalaya, differences between Thakalis of the Thini village – present study area – and other Thakalis of the surrounding villages of the region, introduction of the Jomsom and Thini village with the present context, their caste/ethnic affiliation, and religion. In addition, it also explains the involvement of Thini villagers in salt trade before invasion of Chinese army in Tibet in 1959.

### 2.2 Geographical Background

Mustang is divided into two broad regions; Upper Mustang and Lower Mustang. The massive of Himalayan Mountain has also divided Mustang into two distinct geographical regions as South facing Mustang and North facing Mustang. The traditional and geographical divisions of Mustang have also distinguished people's adaptation to the nature for their livelihood. So, Mustang can be said as a region of diverse nature and people.

The Kaligandaki River that is originated from the border of Tibet links both regions as lifeline for many people for their livelihood. Kaligandaki flows between two high mountains, Annapurna 1<sup>st</sup> of 8091 masl and Dhaulagiri of 8167 masl that has also created deepest gorge of the world in nearby Dana of Lower Mustang. The difference between valley floors of gorge to top of the mountain is up to 6000 masl (Vinding, 1998: 10). Most settlements of lower Mustang are developed along the Kaligandaki River.

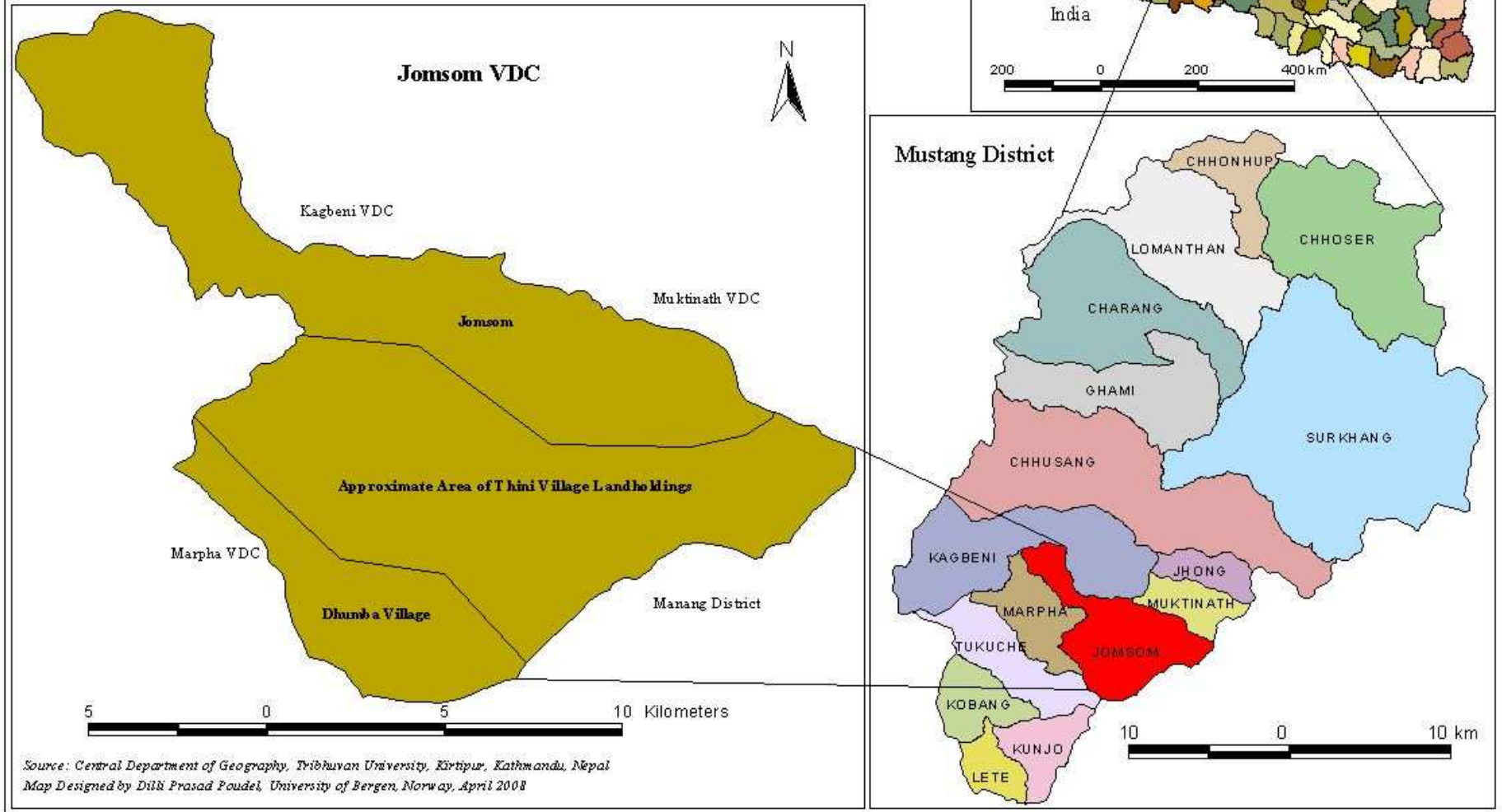
The region is also distinct in term of its climate. The monsoon clouds blow from East/South or West. But Himalayan mountain stands as a barrier of monsoon wind toward North facing Mustang. That is why the North-facing region of Mustang is rain-shadows of Himalaya. Therefore the region is categorized as semi-arid. In contrary, South-facing Mustang receives more rainfall in monsoon season. Thus, North facing Mustang has less vegetation in comparison to the South-facing Mustang. The land surface of Mustang approximately ranges from 2000m to 8167masl.

According to the administrative divisions of Nepal, Mustang district comprises 16 VDCs<sup>4</sup>. Among them Chhusang, Surkhang, Ghami, Charang, Lomanthang, Chhosar and Chhonhup are

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<sup>4</sup> For the administrative purpose, Nepal is divided into 5 development regions, 14 Zones, 75 districts, 3915 Village Development Committees (VDCs) and 58 municipalities. Each VDC is again divided into 9 wards and municipalities are divided from 9 to 35 wards (Statistical Pocket Book, 2006, CBS). Wards are the lowest political and administrative unit of Nepal.

**Map 2.1**  
**Location Map of the Study Area**



included in Upper Mustang and Lete, Kunjo, Kobang, Tukuche, Marpha, Jomsom Kagbeni, Muktinath and Jhong are included within Lower Mustang. The present study area, namely Thini village is located in the Jomsom VDC, Lower Mustang District, Dhaulagiri zone and Western Development Region of Nepal (see location map 2.1).

### **2.3 Ethnic Identity: Thak Khola and Thakali**

Along the Kaligandaki River of Lower Mustang, most of Thakali, an ethnic community of Nepal are residing and the region is known as Thak Khola<sup>5</sup>. Thak Khola extends from Ghasha village in the South to Jomsom (district headquarters of Mustang) in the North. Historically, the region was under Tibetan ruler, but after 1786, it was included in Nepal (Vinding 1998: 69). Geographically, most areas of Thak Khola lie between Tibetan plateau in the North and high Himalayan Mountains in the South. The region between Tibetan plateau and Himalayan Mountain is called Trans-Himalaya.

Based on tradition, there are three distinct divisions of the Lower Mustang region. The area from Ghasa village in the South to Tukuche village in the North is known as *Thaksatsaya* (lit. seven hundred Thakalis). Ghasa, Lete, Kunjo, Taglung, Titi, Larjung, Kobang, Khanti and Tukuche are some of the major villages within *Thaksatsaya* region. Likewise, *Panchgaun* (lit. 5 villages) is the second main division of Lower Mustang, which comprises Thini, Syang, Marpha, Chhairo and Chimang, locally known as the original five Thakalis villages since its origin. Later on Jomsom, Dhumba and Samle were also included within *Panchgaun*. The villages which are located North from Jomsom called *Baragaun* (lit. 12 villages). Kagbeni, Jharkot, Jhong and Muktinath are some of the major villages with *Baragaun*. The inhabitants of *Baragaun* are more inclined to Tibetan culture and tradition. At present, different kinds of caste/ethnic people are living in the region. Therefore, it is almost impossible to distinguish them according to their caste/ethnic affiliation.

Ethnically, Thakalis can be categorized as Tamang Thakali, Mawatan Thakali and Yhulkasompaimhi Thakali (Ibid: 19). Tamang Thakalis are originally from *Thaksatsaya*, Mawatan and Yhulkasompaimhi Thakalis are from *Panchgaun*. Among the villages of *Panchgaun*, categorically Mawatan Thakalis are from Marpha and Yhulkasompaimhi Thakalis are from Thini, Syang and Chimang. The people of Baragaun are not categorized as Thakali. Their culture and tradition resemble Tibetan culture and tradition. The languages spoken by Thakalis fall in Tibeto-Burman category, and they believe in Buddhism.

In addition, Thini village, one of the oldest Thakali villages in Thak Khola region does not categorize itself within *Panchgaule* (people from *Pachgaun*), instead they categorize themselves

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<sup>5</sup> 'Thak' means Thakali and 'Khola' means river or stream in Nepali language. Thus, the 'Thak Khola' means Thakalis residing in the bank of the river (Kaligandaki River).

within *Tingale* Thakali (lit. Thakali from three villages) which includes Thini, Syang and Chimang. According to the informants from Thini, they do not categorize those people who are originated from Marpha and Chhairo as original Thakali. They even do not have socio-religious relationships such as marriage and other local religious activities with Marpha and Chhairo.

The present study area is located in Jomsom VDC of lower Mustang region, but it also lies North from the Himalayan range, and in the border between upper and lower Mustang. So, it contains both kinds of characteristics of upper and lower Mustang. Physically villagers are adapted to high mountain temperature and sustain their livelihood with such climatic rigidity since historic past, and socially they are more inclined to the people from lower region. The details of Jomsom VDC and Thini village are presented in the following sections.

## 2.4 Jomsom VDC

Jomsom VDC<sup>6</sup> (2750 masl) of Mustang (28° 20' to 29°05' Northern latitudes and 83° 30' to 84° 15' Eastern longitudes.) district is located within the Western Development Region of Nepal (26° 22' N to 30° 27' N latitudes and 80° 4' E to 88° 12' E longitudes). Geographically, Jomsom lies in the Trans-Himalaya rain shadow zone, which also causes dry climate and desert-like landscape. It is extended within 28° 40' to 28°55' Northern latitudes and 83° 40' to 83° 55' Eastern longitudes.

Historically, Jomsom was established by the Three-eyed king *Ghel Tangwo Chen*<sup>7</sup> of Thini which used to be called *Dzong Samma* meaning 'New Fort'. The king of Thini established the *Dzong Samma* to monitor and regulate the movement of North-South trade. Before invasion of Tibet by Chinese army in 1959 this was the famous salt trading route between Nepal, Tibet and India and the Thakalis, well known for their trading skills, were involved in this salt trade and reached a



**Photo 2.1 Jomsom village seen from Thini village**

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<sup>6</sup> The name of Jomsom VDC comes from the name of Jomsom village. The area seen in the photo 2.1 is also called Jomsom but this is known as Jomsom Airport or Puthang locally.

<sup>7</sup> A brochure published by Jomsom UCO of ACAP also named Thang Mig Chen for the Three-eyed king of Thini but during my fieldwork I asked about it with some of the old villagers they named the Three-eyed king as Ghel Tangwo Chen

high living standard (Graafen & Seeber, 1995 cited in Benachib, H. et al). But after Chinese invasion in Tibet dramatic changes in the pursuits of villagers' livelihood took place (Meserschmidt, 1982). Nowadays there is no more such traditional salt trade (may be very few) because cheap Nepali salt is used by villagers and with the passage of time they have also adopted new sources of earnings such as trade and tourism.

Thakalis and Gurung are the dominant ethnic community of Jomsom but other castes like Bhrahman, Chettri and other are also in big numbers. However, it has witnessed important changes, from a traditional Thakali village to a multifunctional and multiethnic town settlement (Benachib, et al. In: <http://www.uni-giessen.de/~gg1057/nepal/jomosom.htm>).

**Table 2. 1 Caste/Ethnic affiliation, Jomsom VDC**

No	Caste/Ethnic	Total Household	No	Caste/Ethnic	Total Household
1	Thakali	511	9	Tamang	24
2	Gurung	405	10	Sehrpa	23
3	Brahman Hill	168	11	Thakuri	18
4	Chhetri	131	12	Unidentified caste	14
5	Magar	107	13	Rai	09
6	Kami	101	14	Kayastha	07
7	Newar	77	15	Sarki	05
8	Damai/Dholi	71	16	Others	27

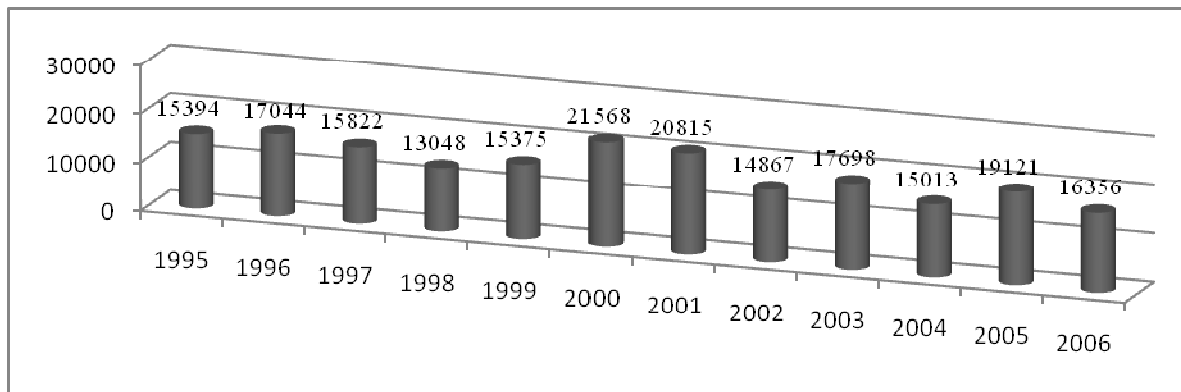
Source: CBS 2001

Table 2.1 clearly reveals the Caste/Ethnic variations have been introduced in Jomsom VDC. Being a commercial centre with government offices and private merchants Jomsom is also a market centre and hub for surrounding villages. Especially Thini is quite near from Jomsom, so, Thini villagers may get some advantage from Jomsom in the pursuits of their livelihood.

At present, Jomsom is becoming more commercial centre day-by-day where the tourism is a prominent business and this is also district headquarter of Mustang, so, all the government activities are found in Jomsom. Most of the constructions and activities of Jomsom are tourist oriented because it is located on one of the main trekking routes within ACAP region. The following figure shows total number of tourists from 1995 to 2006 registered in ACAP records at Jomsom.



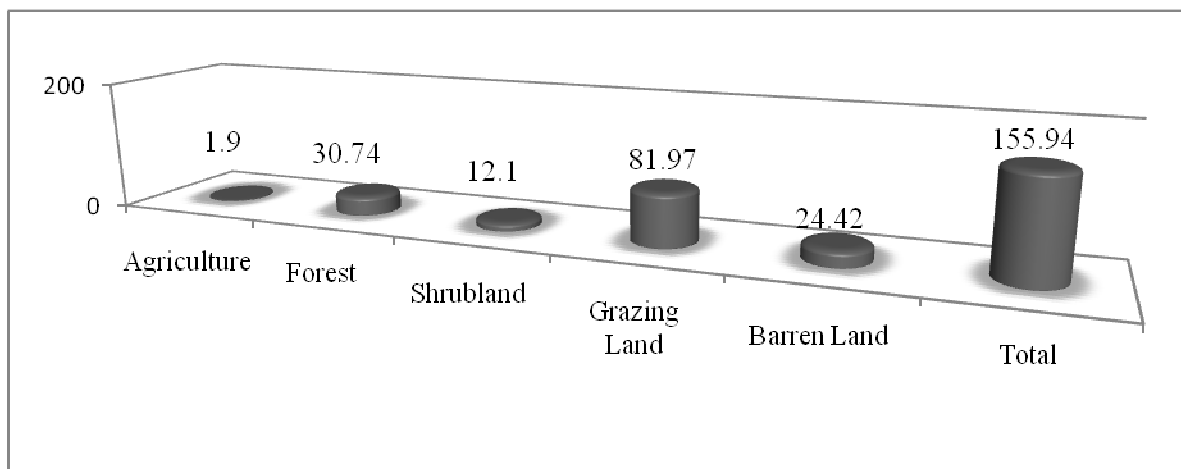
**Figure 2. 1 No. of Tourists Registered in ACAP Records at Jomsom (1995-2006)**



Source: NTNC-ACAP-UCO Jomsom, 2007

Agriculture fields cover lowest size of land in comparison to other land uses of Jomsom VDC, which is figured out in the figure 2.2. The common natural resources such as forest, shrub land and grazing land cover most parts of Jomsom VDC. Figure 2.2 represents the land-uses of Jomsom Village Development Committee (VDC).

**Figure 2. 2 Land use of Jomsom VDC (in Square Kilometer)**



Source: Land Resource Mapping Project (LRMP, 1986)

## 2.5 Thini and Thakali

Among the total 3915 VDCs of Nepal, Thini (3100 masl) lies in Jomsom VDC of Mustang District. Jomsom VDC is again divided into 9 wards. The present research conducted household survey in ward numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 and these wards belong to Thini village. Thini is located South from Jomsom and on the lap of Nilgiri Himal (6698 masl). It takes about half an hour on foot from Jomsom to Thini.

Thini is the oldest village of *Tingaun* (or *Panchgaun*) of Mustang. The name of Thini village originated from Tibetan word *Thin* meaning *base* or *root*. The famous Three-eyed king *Ghel*

*Tangwo Chen* who established *Dzong Samma* (Jomsom; Nepali rendition) used to rule in Thini.

About 15 minutes walking distance from present Thini village there is an ancient place called *Gharab Dzong* where the king *Ghel Tangwo Chen*'s ruined fort can be seen. Actually, present Thini village was shifted from *Gharab Dzong*. Thini still has *Kot Ghar* (arsenal/fort) where they have preserved ancient artilleries and weapons.



**Photo 2.2 Thini village seen from South**

They open *Kot Ghar* once in a year for the religious purpose. It happens during the Hindu Festival *Dashain* that occurs in October/November (in 2007- *Dashain* celebrated in October).

Thakalis are the dominant community in Thini. About 73 per cent of the villagers are Thakali. However, other ethnic communities such as Kami, Gurung, Damai, Magar, Sherpa, Mahat and Lama are also living in Thini. Table 2.2 shows the total number of households in Thini.

**Table 2. 2 Total Population of Thini in 2001**

Ward No.	Household	Male	Female	Total
1	31	70	44	114
2	30	52	62	114
3	23	42	38	80
4	28	56	52	108
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>416</b>

Source: CBS, 2001

There were 112 households in 2001 (CBS census) in Thini but it was 97 during the fieldwork (see Appendix 1). According to the informants, because of its climatic and geographical rigidness, and lack of various options for earning livelihood, the total number of households from Thini is

decreasing. Mainly, young villagers want to either migrate to other places of Nepal (especially in Kathmandu and Pokhara) or to go abroad to find a payable job (see section 6.4).

Thini has one primary school, one primary health post, and one local private club especially for the youngsters. Essential infrastructures such as electricity and drinking water are available in Thini (see appendix 1). Almost all the households have toilets and drinking water tap inside the house. Very few households use public drinking water tap. However, public taps are in accessible distance from their house. It takes 2-5 minutes from their house. Many households own colour television, DVD player and Radio. A few households own all of them and some of them own at least one of them (see appendix 1). In addition, keeping DVD player with colour television is increasing and it is becoming a sign of wealth. Seeing such infrastructures in such a marginal geographic location raise the questions of how these households are earning money and what the earning sources are.

### **2.5.1 Were Thini Villagers involved in Salt Trade?**

As mentioned earlier, Thakalis are the business acumen. Traditionally, their main livelihood activities comprise agriculture, livestock and trade. Though Thakalis of *Thaksatsaya* and Marpha involved in the salt trade, Thakalis of *Tingaun* did not directly involve in salt trade. Either these villagers used to exchange the salt with cereals or some used to rent their mules with traders. Because Thakalis of *Tingaun* are located off-route from the traditional salt trade route of Thak Kholā.

According to one of my oldest Thakali informants (77 years old), some Thakalis of Thini were involved in salt trade as brokers and traders. He again says, of total households about 10-20 households were in this profession either directly or indirectly involved. Although, agriculture, livestock rearing, and running *Bhattis* (taverns) in South in winter season were the main subsistence strategies of them too, some of them used to buy salt with the traders from North and sell them to the traders from South.

However, most of them used to exchange salt with barley and *Karu*<sup>8</sup> (photo 2.3) with the traders of North and used to exchange salt with rice with the traders of South for their household use only. Some households also used to rent their mules and horses with the salt traders of North and South.

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<sup>8</sup> A Beardless or naked type of grain, which is longer than wheat (*Triticum vulgare*), and similar to barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), locally known as *karu* (*Hordeum vulgare* subspecies) (Source: personal communication with Prof. Dr. Ram Prasad Chaudhari, department of Botany, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal).

In 1959 AD, when Chinese armies invaded Tibet the traditional business of salt trade suddenly stopped. Mostly, the Thakalis of *Thaksatsaya* and Marpha had gotten sudden effect of the changes in their pursuits of livelihood. Since they were business acumen, they slowly changed themselves from salt traders to hotel and guesthouse runners and involved in other types of business in the South. In contrary, Thini villagers did



**Photo 2. 3 The main agricultural productions of Thini; left bowl with barley and right bowl with *karu***

not get any sudden effect of the Chinese invasion of Tibet. Since, they were not fully dependent on salt trade so far, they continued their traditional subsistence activities such as agriculture, livestock and the *Bhatti* running in the South in winter. Those households who used to rent their mules and horses with the salt traders continued carrying the goods from the South to the people of Mustang, and after the introduction of tourism (during 80s) they also started to rent their mules and horses to carry tourist baggage and goods for the hoteliers and guest house runners of Mustang.

## **2.6 Hindu looking Buddhist**

At present, more than 90% of Thini villagers believe in Buddhism. However, Thini also has a well-preserved *Bon Gomba* (Bon Monastery) they call *Thini Bonpo Gomba*. In the past time, before the introduction of Buddhism in the region, they used to believe in Bon Religion. According to the informants, there are two kinds of *Bonpo*, i.e. (a) *Bhonnak* (black), and (b) *Bhonggar* (white). The former sacrificed the animals for the religious purposes and latter did not believe in sacrifice. However, after the introduction of Buddhism, they gradually changed themselves into Buddhism.

Surprisingly, at present, almost all the first names (calling names) of the villagers are taken from the Hindu story, myth and religion or they are like Hindu people (except the old *Lamas* of the *Gomba*,). Young *Lamas* also have Hindu type names. Their activities, bodily as well as facial

expressions do not resemble Tibetans<sup>9</sup>. The youngsters of the village do not speak (or not frequently) Thakali language in their regular talking. Even within family members, parents and children talk in Nepali language. Although *Gaun Samiti* (Village Committee) made a decision to speak Thakali language compulsorily in the village, the decision is not working as they previously assumed. Table 2.4 shows the respondents' religion according to their caste/ethnic affiliation.

**Table 2. 3 Caste/Ethnic affiliation and Religion of Respondents**

Caste/Ethnic affiliation	Religion		Total	%
	Buddhist	Hindu		
Damai	0	2	2	4.0
Gurung	3	0	3	6.0
Kami	0	2	2	4.0
Magar	1	0	1	2.0
Sherpa	1	0	1	2.0
Thakali	41	0	41	82.0
Total	46	4	50	100.00
%	92.0	8.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2007

However, all the Thakalis explicitly say that they believe in Buddhism, during the fieldwork, it was realized that there will probably be more influence of Hinduism in their regular activities in the future.

<sup>9</sup> A Nepalese anthropologist Dor Bahadur Bista (1971) mentions, “*The Thakalis built Tibetan-style Buddhist Gompa temples in every convenient place and established a few monasteries with learned Lamas and disciples. They even laid it down that the second son of every family should live in celibacy and study to be a disciple in the Tibetan style. They also established a nunnery for the women and made similar rules. The Tibetan script was adopted for their language, and their money was invested in fancy, expensive Tibetan clothes and jewellery. None of these innovations, however, really succeeded in bringing them within the fold of the culture and society of the peoples to the North (p. 54) ..... the Thakalis began to alter their Lamaistic cultural development and turned it towards Hinduism (p. 59)..... Whenever they were outside Thak, they were not supposed to speak their own language or the Tibeto-Burman tongue (p. 59)*”.

## **3. Method**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This section focuses on the roles and procedures adopted to collect primary (as well as secondary) information, the problems I faced, and the experiences I gained during the fieldwork. Likewise, it also focuses on the techniques and the tools applied to analyze the entire data.

### **3.2 Why Thini as a Study Area?**

In concern of my study location, I had two broad areas of Nepal that I have kept in my mind just before coming to University of Bergen (UiB) from Nepal in August 2006. First was Sarlahi district, a plain Terai region of Mid-Southern Nepal, which shares border with Bihar, India and where I was born. Second was Mustang district, a high mountain Trans-Himalayan region of Nepal, which shares border with Tibetan Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China where I had frequently visited. Both locations were favourable for me because I was familiar with them. Wherever the location would be my interest was on rural peoples' livelihoods.

Later, after consultation with my supervisor I decided to do my fieldwork in Mustang district. It was impossible to cover whole Mustang as a study unit, and then I selected one village, which is known as Thini. Besides the above-mentioned reasons, I had three more reasons to choose Thini as a study area for the present research.

First, geographically, Thini is located in the Trans-Himalayan Region where natural resources such as forest, water and pastureland have very important role in making a living of the local villagers (Messerschmidt, 1986; Pyers, 1985; Vinding, 1998). On the other hand, in 1993 a conservation-cum-development project, namely Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) was established in Jomsom to manage and regulate the natural resources of the region, which was managed by villagers themselves in the past. So, in this situation how local villagers are using natural resources for their livelihood is an interesting question. Jomsom, the district headquarters of Mustang, is in accessible distance from Thini. Nowadays, Jomsom is growing very fast as a market centre and all kinds of government offices and private merchants are concentrating there. So, new possibilities may emerge for Thini villagers in the pursuit of their livelihood. Thus, this factor strongly motivated me to choose Thini as a study area.

Second, as I have mentioned above, I have visited the region a couple of times prior to my fieldwork. I was (to some extent) familiar with their social activities. In addition, there were also some contacts (especially in Jomsom) who were willing to help me, so, this factor also motivated me to choose Thini as my study area. Third, although it is a mountainous village, Thini is in quite accessible and secure place to conduct fieldwork, because it is near and takes about half an hour

from Jomsom to Thini on foot. Moreover, there are many accesses to reach Jomsom too because it is connected with domestic airlines networks from Pokhara (one of the big cities of Nepal), trekking route via Beni (Myagdi districts of Nepal) and jeep and bike from Lete (Lower Mustang). So, there are almost all the possibilities to reach Jomsom and Thini. This factor also encouraged me to conduct the present research in Thini.

### 3.3 Shaping Behavioural Settings in the Fieldwork

Aase<sup>10</sup> has alerted us about possible problems because of role, status and dilemma of researcher and respondents during the fieldworks in his class lectures for Master and M.Phil students at UiB. As he said in one of his lectures, a researcher always brings along his/her social status. Therefore, he or she has some situated knowledge depending on age, sex, gender, caste/ethnic affiliation and profession about his/her society. I knew my study site physically but I do not belong to their society and social norms. I have some doubts because of my so-called *Bhrahman* upper caste status and I have another doubt that how they would perceive me as *a Nepali living and studying in Norway*. Finally, with these doubts, I reached Nepal for the fieldwork in last week of March 2007.

After basic preparation and visiting libraries in Kathmandu and Pokhara, I took plane to Jomsom in the middle of April 2007. As I mentioned earlier, I have some contacts in Jomsom, so, I went to *Didi's* (lit. elder sister, in Nepali language<sup>11</sup>) hotel because I have been there a couple of times, hoping that she might be a *gate opener* for my research. *Didi's* family is also influential in Jomsom and surrounding villages because her husband (I called him *Bhinaju*, lit. brother-in-law, in Nepali language) is *Thuimi* or *Mukhiya* (headman) of Puthang (also known as Jomsom Airport) and Syang villages. Actually, *Didi* and *Bhinaju* helped me until the last of my fieldwork. They helped me in three ways; first, by introducing key persons, second, by providing information regarding my research objectives and third, by providing me accommodation in the beginning.

Same day of my arrival in Jomsom I contacted ACAP employees and next day I went to Thini. One of the ACAP personnel gave me a name of contact person in Thini. I went directly to meet him who was also the chief of the Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC). When I reached Thini, people were in some kind of meeting; luckily, I was accustomed with other villagers too. It was my first day in Thini, and I introduced myself to them and explained my plans and programmes of being there. However, most of them had some kinds of doubt and confusion in their face after seeing me. Luckily, the CAMC chief was more interested in my study topic and promised me to help in the future. He took me to a house (some of the rooms of

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<sup>10</sup> Professor Tor Halfden Aase of University of Bergen (UiB), Bergen, Norway

<sup>11</sup> The terms *Didi* is also used to call with respect to the elder woman than the speaker. Though I said *Didi* to her but she is not my real sister

that house were designed like a guesthouse) and asked a woman for a place for me to live. The old woman (I used to call her *Aama*, lit. mother, in Nepali language<sup>12</sup>) readily accepted the proposal and I put down my entire luggage immediately. Unluckily, CAMC chief including some other villagers with whom I had met in the meeting had planned to leave village to participate in a festival for a week. In the evening, a daughter of *Aama* arrived and said to me that the rooms were already booked for several days for a Japanese film shooting team, so I have to leave it by next morning. Next morning I left that place and tried to find another house to live in Thini. I also went to meet school headmaster and requested him to help me to find a place. We visited entire village, talked with many households but none of them were ready to give me a place to live. Disappointed, in the evening I came back to Jomsom and entered into *Didi's* hotel again.

Later, I came to know that villagers suspected me as a *Maoist*<sup>13</sup> *cadre* (which connoted bad meaning in the society during the fieldwork) in the beginning; it is because they also considered me as a *Mon* (a man from lowland) and as a *Phichepemhi* (outsider) from their society. I needed to switch to another status very soon; otherwise, I could not be able to collect information. To solve the dilemma between villagers and me, I regularly went to Thini village from Jomsom. Professor Aase has mentioned in another lecture that a researcher should be able to achieve a good and acceptable status in respondents' society to collect insight information about the subject. So, to achieve an acceptable status, I regularly met the villagers, tried to talk to them with lots of respect, tried to learn and use a few Thakali words in my regular language and tried to behave like them.

During the pursuit of my status, I was also collecting information by observing and talking with villagers. However, I had never shown the questionnaire forms before achieving acceptable status in their society; instead, I filled them in my living room after I had completed interviewing them. However, the dilemma was decreasing because of my regular visit to the village, meeting with local schoolteachers, behaving friendly with local youngsters and talking with elder villagers. In that manner, different kinds of roles finally led me to get closer with the villagers.

Prof. Chaudhary<sup>14</sup>, who visited Thini a few years ago, had given me a Photograph of a woman of Thini village to give it back to her as a gift. Luckily, that photograph was of daughter of recent

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<sup>12</sup> The terms *Aama* is also used to call with respect to the older woman. Though I said *Aama* to her but she is not my real *Aama*

<sup>13</sup> Nepal Communist Party (Maoist), this party was underground and lurching nationwide insurgency against the government during last 11 years. Although during my fieldwork, they were not underground but villagers still had some kinds of confusion and fear about them.

<sup>14</sup> Prof. Dr. Ram Prasad Chaudhary, former member of National Planning Commission of Nepal. He had also visited Thini for some kind of research a few years ago. Prof. Chaudhary is currently affiliated with Department of Botany, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal



*Thuimi* (headman or chief of the village) of Thini. Actually, this photograph helped me to get access in *Thuimi*'s house within a week of my fieldwork.

Soon (within about 10/12 days), I achieved a good status in their society as *a researcher* or *a book writer* about them. However, some of the villagers were still suspecting me as an ACAP employee. I became closer with youngsters when they asked me to teach them Computers in their local Club, *Jana Mukti Youth Club* (Although the computer-teaching programme stopped within a week because of their works in the fields). I helped them to learn computer, although I am not perfect in computer myself. I did that as a role to achieve a confident status in their society hoping that would minimize the scepticism of villagers towards me. It's like what Aase (1997:1) says, the goal for any field researcher is to be able to go behind the scene and get access to study processes that are hidden to the casual observer.

Finally, I became fully accepted as a researcher by the villagers and they became ready to give me a place to live in Thini. Then, I shifted from Jomsom to Thini. My stay in Jomsom was also very interesting and helpful. Every evening I used to crosscheck all the information with *Bhinaju* (those I have collected in the daytime). He also gave some information regarding ACAP's roles on villagers' livelihood. Similarly, one of my relatives was also in Jomsom as a government officer. He also helped me to get secondary information from the various government offices in Jomsom.

In the second week of May I completed my first phase of research (conducting household survey), then I went to Kathmandu to meet with supervisor (he was there for a week). I explained him all the events and activities that had occurred during the fieldwork. I got some fruitful comments from him regarding the fieldwork. He especially recommended me to talk informally with the villagers when I go back for the second phase of my fieldwork.

Pausing the fieldwork, in the middle of the work, was also my strategy because I previously thought that next time when I would come back to Thini then villagers would trust me more. Actually, this became true and they stopped suspecting me after my next arrival in the village.

The second visit of my fieldwork also became fruitful. Although this time (end of May) villagers were busy in their fields, I went in their agricultural fields and had conversations with them. This process of doing interview finally helped me to conduct more close observation of their activities. Now, I started feeling of *Rangmi* (insider) while I was talking and observing them.

During my second visit, I collected the information by informal talks and interviews with old villagers, schoolteachers and some ACAP members. In the end of the fieldwork (about mid June),

many people including ACAP members, government personnel and almost all the Thini villagers started to recognize me easily.

### 3.4 Respondent and Sampling procedure

The process of participating with the villagers, as I have explained in the previous section, actually helped me to select the respondents as per my needs. Special attention paid to accumulate diverse contexts of the society regarding the subject matters of the present study. My subject of study is to know how villagers are sustaining livelihood in a situation of formally regulated common-pool resources, so, this denotes to speak directly with the villagers to acquire their experiences and perceptions regarding the situations. Thus, primary attention had been given to talk with as many villagers as possible. Besides, I had also selected some outsider informants such as ACAP personnel, schoolteachers and surrounding villagers. Talking with outsiders actually helped me to broaden the understanding of the subject of the study. The following table shows the respondents' age and gender.

**Table 3. 1 Respondents' Age & Gender**

Respondents' Age	Gender		Total	%
	Male	Female		
20-24	2	0	2	4.0
25-29	1	2	3	6.0
30-34	1	2	3	6.0
35-39	5	1	6	12.0
40-44	6	2	8	16.0
45-49	5	1	6	12.0
50-54	5	1	6	12.0
55-59	3	1	4	8.0
60-64	4	1	5	10.0
65-69	1	0	1	2.0
70-74	3	0	3	6.0
75-79	1	0	1	2.0
80-84	2	0	2	4.0
Total	39	11	50	100.0

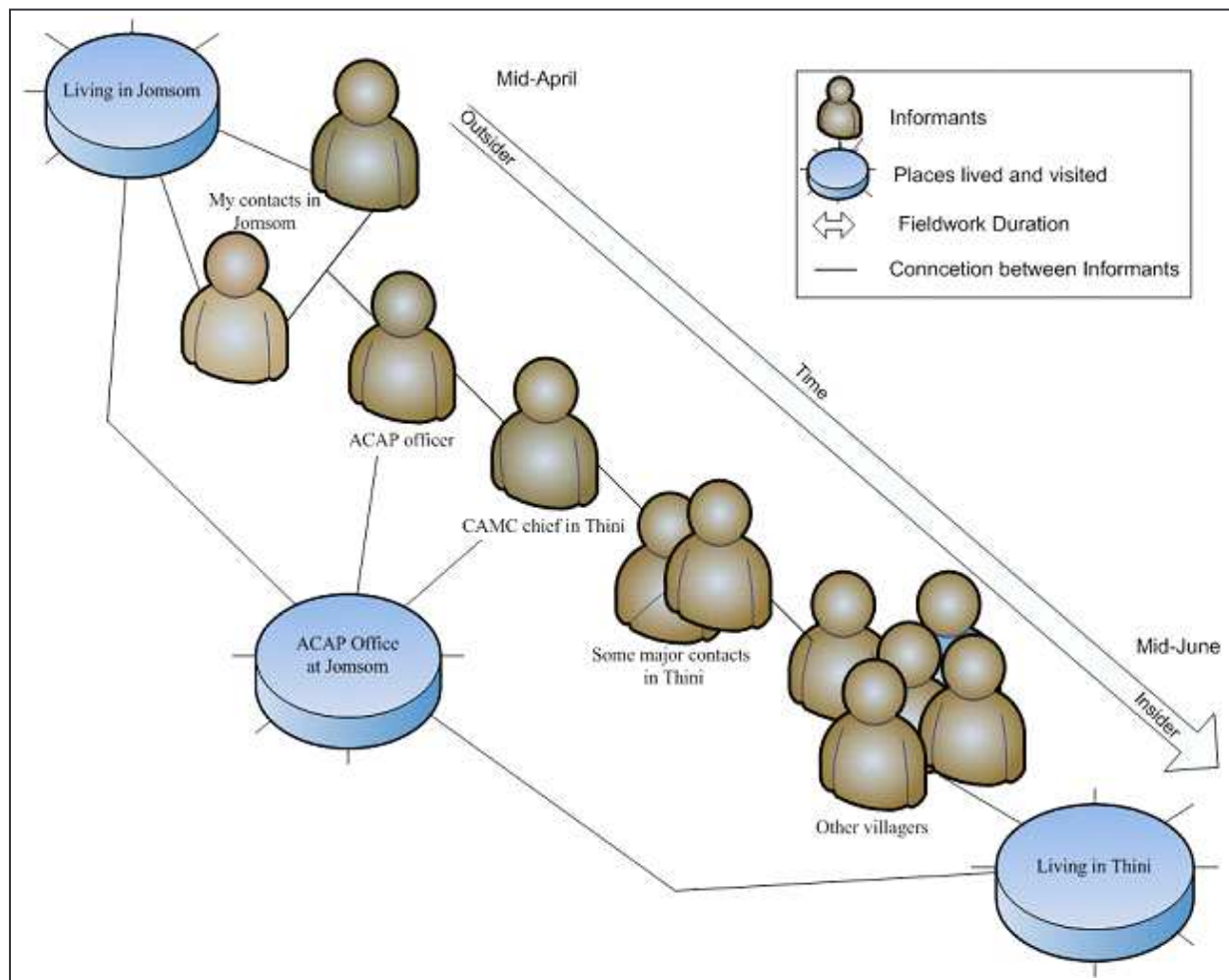
Source: Field Survey 2007

The snowball or chain sampling was applied to select the required informants. Schutt (1996: 164) says that this is the process of identifying one member of the population and speak to him, then ask him to identify others in the population and speak to them, then ask them to identify others, etc. Actually, I had done exactly as the process mentioned by Schutt. I used to live in *Didi's* hotel where many people used to visit regularly. Some of them were to meet with *Bhinaju* and some of them were to have *Raksi* (locally produced alcohol from *karu*, rice, wheat, barley). This actually

extended my links with locals. Actually, my research started from them. Because of them, I met with one of ACAP officers who suggested me to meet CAMC leader in Thini. Then I met the leader. The leader helped me to contact with other members of the society and so on.

Although I surveyed 50 households with semi-structured questionnaires (see appendix 2), my focus was more on quality information rather than the quantity of the respondents. Actually, the snowball or chain sampling method to select the respondents helped to reach my target. It was like, as Patton (2002: 236) says, asking a number of people the snowball got bigger and bigger as I accumulated new information. The process of snowball or chain sampling of the present study is presented in the following figure.

**Figure 3. 1 The Snowball or Chain Sampling**



Source: Fieldwork, 2007

### 3.5 Unit of Study

The present study considered household as the social unit for the analysis. The households is conventionally conceived as social group which resides in the same place, shares the same meals,

and makes joint or coordinated decisions over resource allocation and income distribution (Meillassoux, 1981; Ellis, 1993; cited in Ellis, 2000: 18). It was easy to collect information and to understand villagers' livelihood activities and their reliance on CPRs with its limited inhabitants in depth because the members of the households of Thini reside together, share the same meal, and makes common decisions over CPRs for making a living.

### **3.6 Qualitative and Quantitative Research Technique**

While distinguishing qualitative and quantitative methods, Patton (2002:14) argues that qualitative methods facilitate study of issues in depth and detail, and quantitative methods, on the other hand, requires the use of standardized measures where peoples' varying perspectives and expressions can be fit into a limited number of predetermined response categories by assigning numbers. He further argues that quantitative methods help us to get broad and generalizable set of findings while, on the other hand, qualitative methods help us to increases the depth of understandings of the cases and situations studied but it reduces generability (Ibid). Hoepfl (1997; cited in Golafshani, 2003: 4) says that unlike quantitative researchers who seek causal determination, prediction, and generalization of findings, qualitative researchers seek instead illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situations. Flick (2006: 66) says that qualitative methods conceptualize how the subjects under study - their experiences, actions and interactions - relate to the context in which they are studied in different ways.

According to my understanding, the strength of the qualitative research is the ability to explore the events immediately that were observed during the fieldwork and reach in the depth of contexts and causal connections of the events or phenomenon of being studied. Actually, the objectives of the study and the nature of the data needed, determine the techniques to be applied in the research. Thus, it depends largely on the methodological skill, sensitivity, and integrity of the researcher (Patton 2002: 5).

The primary focus of the present study is to analyze the contents qualitatively. A household survey was also conducted by designing semi-structured questionnaire that also permit to analyze the topic quantitatively to some extent. Therefore, according to the need of the analysis, present study will apply both techniques in the relevant sections. Because of the fact that numbers (quantitative) and words (qualitative) are both needed if we are to understand the world (Miles et al. 1994: 40) and both techniques involve differing strength and weaknesses, they constitute alternative, but not mutually exclusive, strategies for research (Patton 2002: 14).

### **3.6.1 Why more focus in Qualitative Technique?**

The main concern of the present study is to know how villagers are sustaining livelihood in a situation of common-pool resources. The research agendas denote more qualitative discussions in the analysis since it talks about the experiences and perceptions of the people (Ibid: 4-5). That is why it mostly tries to explore the results qualitatively - descriptive and analytical.

To explore the subject matters of the present study, I have to enter into villagers' life world and try to understand them; of course, it calls for qualitative research methods to analyze the information. Likewise, my concern is also to know how villagers perceive the ACAP. To explore such research questions I need to reach the depth of the cases evolved during the interview with the respondents and try to understand them, so, qualitative research and analysis methods would be more convenient for such kind of information.

### **3.7 Data Collection**

As Schutt (1996) says, "*a social research question is a question about the social world that you seek to answer through the collection of empirical data*". However, data collection in social science research is not as easy as we have expected, because the social events and phenomena are interwoven and socially constructed which are also attached with human sentiments. That is why Aase (1997) says that data are not finished product and readily available, but they should be produced by observing and conceptualizing the actions and statements that are taking place in the society. Therefore, to acquire the data in regarding research questions, I have applied primary as well as secondary and qualitative as well quantitative techniques of data collection. Especially, interview was the main technique of data collection. I have interviewed 50 households of Thini by designing semi-structured questionnaire forms; I have also conducted some informal interviews with key persons and outsiders, and with the farmers in their farming fields. Likewise, observation technique was the second main research technique. Actually, observation technique applied to see the activities of the household, to count the household members, activities of the farmers and the events that can be observed (by all the senses). Lastly, photographs were also used to collect primary information as well as to strengthen the interview and observation techniques. The following section analyzes that how I applied the techniques in the field.

#### **3.7.1 Interview**

The present study is based on face-to-face communication between *informant* and *me* via speaking and talking, showing photographs, and figures considering local sayings, phrases, and clichés. Moreover, a talk must start through a formal or informal interview. Maccoby and Maccoby (1954: 499; cited from Dunn, 2003: 51) define an interview as 'a face-to-face verbal interchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of

opinion or belief from another person or persons'. According to Briggs (1992: 6-7) interview is the collection of data which must occur in a face-to-face situation.

50 (of 97) households of Thini were interviewed by designing semi-structured questionnaires (see Appendix 2). And, several informal conversations (field conversation) with unstructured questions had also been done. The household survey was mostly based on two broad parts. First, the livelihood of the households which included general demographic information of the household, occupations of the household members, agricultural productions of the households, alternative sources of income, number of livestock and its use. Second, the impacts of ACAP on villagers' livelihood, which included villagers' way of using and managing the CPRs, access to collect fodder, firewood, and wild mushroom, and access to graze livestock. Importantly, the figure of peasants' pursuit of livelihood (figure 4.1, page 33) had been drawn and shown to most of the informants to get the information regarding villagers' livelihood.

Though most questions of informal/unstructured interviews were similar to the semi-structured questionnaires, I also talked with the informants in various topics such as their society, culture, day-to-day activities, and their expenditures in various social and religious activities. Such interviews were mostly conducted with key persons of the Thini village, farmers, and a few surrounding villagers. I had also talked with the ACAP personnel and government officers. It also helped me to understand others' perspectives about Thini villagers and the role of ACAP on the villagers.

Key informants were selected purposively during the stay in Thini. Most of them were from Thini (including schoolteachers) but *Didi* and *Bhinaju*, a government as well as two ACAP employees were selected from outside of Thini village. Some informal interviews were also conducted with farmers and hoteliers (outsiders) of Jomsom during the stay in Jomsom.

During the interview, I tried to spend much time with the respondents. Especially while I was talking with key informants and the old persons of the village, it used to take a long time. Sometimes, I had to wait a long time to get the information as per my research questions but I used to listen to them patiently. Sometimes, I tried to switch the topics tactfully whatever they were explaining toward my research questions.

### **3.7.2 Observation and data categorization**

This is the second most important research technique I applied for data collection. Actually, I was neither complete observer nor complete participant of those being studied but it lies, as Shutt (1996: 321) says, somewhere between the complete observer and complete participant. This

technique is also very suitable while collecting qualitative data because all senses - seeing, hearing, feeling, and smelling - integrate into observation (Flick, 2006: 216).

The observed - seeing, smelling, hearing and feeling - phenomena (or events) fall in any of the categorical matrix of our mind. If it does not fall we cannot categorize it as data and it would be meaningless in (cognitive category of) our mind. According to Aase (1997: 2), we localize observations in categories and thereby we attach meaning to the phenomena around us, and they become predictable. Special attention had been paid while interpreting the symbols (Aase: 1994) and their contained denotation and connotation meanings of various things, such as having piles of fire- wood in the house, becoming member of *Dharo* and *Uiimen* (traditional male and female groups of the village respectively) and becoming member of the *Gaun Samiti* (village committee, see chapter five).

I observed households' activities, counted household members and listened to households' events during the household survey. This technique was also quite effective during the various meetings (individuals and groups) in the village. Especially during my stay in Jomsom and Thini, villagers used to visit tavern (almost all Thakali houses have a tavern) for evening get-together and I used to listen and sense their expressions. Villagers also invited me to attend their social ceremonies where I got opportunity to meet with multiple respondents, such kinds of activities and events helped me to observe of those being happenings.

Thini village has a shop (they call it *sasto pasal* meaning 'cheap shop') that is being run by a young Thakali of age 29 (later he became one of my key informant and a friend), where villagers came to buy regular needs such as salt, sugar, oil, cigarette, and many more. I used to visit the shop frequently because different kinds of persons come there and talk about agriculture, money problems, resource problems and so on which were quite related with my research topic. So, listening them by observing the event was my regular work in that shop.

In the beginning of the fieldwork, the categorization of observed phenomena and events were difficult to some extent because I came from different socio-cultural background and it was quite difficult to conceptualize their localization of observed phenomena and events. Especially, they have unique categories of agricultural lands, eg. *Tep*, *Bhumcha*, *Mori* (see appendix 3). In addition, they also have unique social divisions for use and regulation of the CPRs such as forest and water (see chapter five). Nevertheless, after my familiarization, it became easier to understand them and their categories.

### 3.7.3 Photo Elucidating

We (including my co-students) had brought a photo printer during the fieldwork, so I could produce photos whenever I needed. Although interview and observation were my main research techniques for data collection, I also used printed photos to collect the information. For instance, Thakali households keep the firewood on the roof of their house, which also symbolizes as rich and poor household. If one household has more piles of fire wood on the roof or in house, he holds good status and is categorized as rich person in the village. In such a resource poor region, why they are doing that, was my question. To get the answer I have printed some photos of the various kinds of roofs such as a roof with many piles of fire wood, few piles of fire wood, very less fire wood and no fire wood, and asked villagers to give reasons behind it. This technique of data collection really gave me various inside aspects and logics behind this tradition (see the results in chapter seven, box 7.1).

Likewise, I have seen two kinds of agriculture land in Thini, one surrounded by fence and one without fence. I also became curious about this way of doing agriculture. Later, I produced some photos of such agriculture lands and requested the villagers to explain it.

Photographs were also used as incentive. I used to give it as a gift to the chief of village and key informants. Sometimes, they were also used to make fun and to initiate the interview. In the beginning of fieldwork, I had taken a photograph of Thini that cover almost all the houses of Thini<sup>15</sup>. To initiate interview, I used to ask respondents to locate his/her house in the photo (just to make fun). And, he or she tried to find and locate it in the photo. Thus, taking interview in this way made respondent happy and it was effective in my case too.

### 3.7.4 Secondary sources

Textual as well as numerical secondary information are used in the present thesis. The socio-demographic information, which were kept by the village secretary in his *Kuriya* (village archives, see chapter five), were collected and used in the analysis. Information regarding Mustang and Nepal were collected from DDC and CBS records. Specifically, information regarding previous livelihood activities, demographic composition of Thini and Jomsom villages were collected from CBS, DDC and Jomsom VDC records. Previous studies about Mustang, Thak Khola and Thakali community were also reviewed.

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<sup>15</sup> Later, CAMC chief, who is from Thini village, requested me to give this photo to them to published in their upcoming new calendar of *Tingaunle* Thakalis.



### 3.8 Data entering and processing

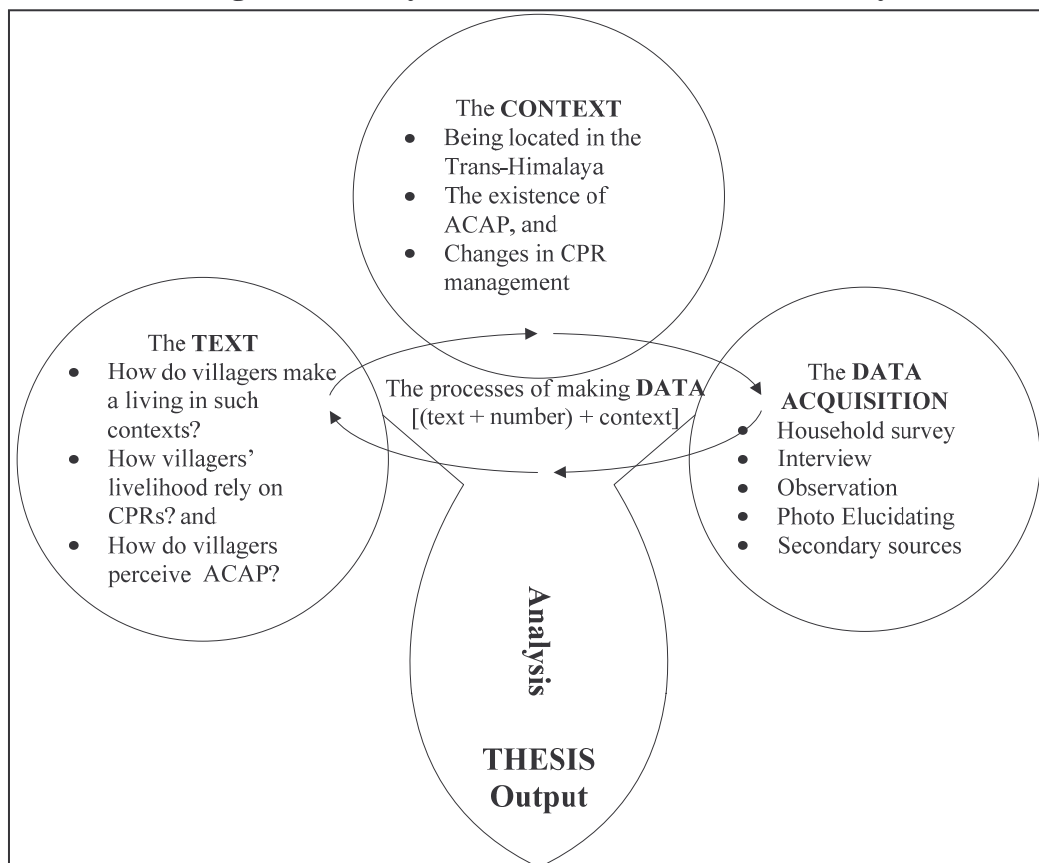
During the fieldwork, interviewed households' information was filled in the semi-structured questionnaire forms. The additional information of household were written on the blank page left with the questionnaire forms. Along with the questionnaire forms, I had also taken a notebook especially for the fieldwork, which I had extensively used to record the information. The everyday activities, local sayings, folklores, stories, clichés and the events were written on the field notebook. The secondary information was collected in three formats during the fieldwork i.e. photocopy, print copy and digital copy.

After the fieldwork, data were scrutinized. Quantitative data were transferred into NSDstat statistical computer software programme and qualitative and textual information were entered in MS-office Word computer programme.

### 3.9 Data Interpretation and Analysis

The challenge of qualitative analysis lies in making sense of massive amounts of data (Patton 2002: 432). The qualitative research will be successful when 'texts' attached with some meaning and answered the 'contexts' being studied. It believes in the words, expressions, symbols, sayings, phrases and clichés. Therefore, present study has also analyzed interview text, informal talk and photos while interpreting the data.

Figure 3. 2 Analytical Framework of the Present Study



Source: Field survey, 2007

Aase (1997: 3) recommends while interpreting the text, a researcher should consider the following four questions. First, he has to conceptualize *which categories* the informants put the subject being studied. Second, the researcher has to find out *how the categories are constituted*. For instance, what are the denotation and connotation of that particular category? Third, it should interpret to clarify *the way informants relate the categories to each other*. The fourth and last task is to interpret *the informants' localisation of observations in the respective categories*. In other words, in which context informants have conceptualized the observed phenomenon or events.

The general 'contexts' of my study village were; being located in the trans-Himalaya, the existence of the ACAP, and changes in CPR management. While, on the other hand, the 'texts' which I analyzed regarding the contexts are; how villagers are sustaining livelihood in such contexts, how villagers' livelihood rely on the CPRs, and their perceptions regarding ACAP. Figure 3.2 could make clearer that how I will analyze the present research.

### **3.10 The Validity and Reliability of Research**

While judging validity and reliability of qualitative research, how and from which perspectives others respond to our work should be considered. At present, qualitative research is growing so much because of its relevance to the study of social relations (Flick: 2006: 11). Schütz (1962; cited in Flick 2006: 371) says that "*the validity of qualitative research depends on how far the researchers' constructions are grounded in the constructions of those whom they studied and how far this grounding is transparent for others*". Patton (2002: 552) considers the credibility of qualitative research depends on *rigorous methods*, which yield high-quality data, the *credibility of the researcher* - which depends on trainings and experiences, and *philosophical belief in the value of qualitative inquiry* - a fundamental inquiry, qualitative methods, inductive analysis, purposeful sampling, and holistic thinking. Mishler (1990; cited in Flick 2006: 372) considers validity as the social construction of knowledge by which we evaluate the trustworthiness of reported observations, interpretations, and generalizations. Thus, the validity and reliability of the qualitative research are the process of minimizing or defining and measuring distortions and biases in the study. Indeed, testing and increasing the reliability and validity will be important to the researches (Golafshani, 2003: 6).

There are three ways that ensure the readers and audiences that the present research is valid and reliable, i.e. the *research methods applied in the present study*, *strategies adopted to collect the information* and *the techniques applied to analyze the information*.

Firstly, I have adopted 'interview' (household survey, key informant interview and informal conversations or field conversations) as a main tool to collect the information, which is less criticized by various authors and considered that it addresses a very limited part of the problem of validity (Flick, 2006: 372). Observation (listen, see, feel and smell) was the second most important tool for data collection. It was also applied to crosscheck the information collected from interviews. For instance, during the household survey, one of interviewees was reproaching ACAP because of not distributing *Poorji*<sup>16</sup> since 8 years (informants did not remember the exact number of years) for the timber. He was trying to get it for the construction of his damaged house since one year (he had also shown me his damaged house, see photo 8.2). In this regard, he visited ACAP office to see the chief in Jomsom and also met CAMC chief in Thini but it was worthless (according to him they were not listening him and his problems carefully). He was upset when he was explaining the situation during the interview. Luckily, this year in May 6, 2007 ACAP and CAMC decided to distribute the *Poorji* to the villagers, where I observed the quarrelling between them and I realized the interview (as an event), and the importance of CPRs for their livelihood. This is the way that how I measured the reliability of the information. Photographs elucidating was third most important technique of data collection and it also applied to confirm the information collected from interview and observation methods (see sub-section 3.7.3).

Secondly, my familiarisation with the study area to some extent helped me a lot to initiate the fieldwork and to minimize the fallacy of data. I have some contacts in Jomsom who helped me to accustom more with people and place, and they were also my *gate-opener* for the data collection, which finally led to get more reliable and valid information (see section 3.3).

Lastly, as mentioned in section 3.9 (Data Interpretation and Analysis) of this chapter, present study is trying to bring texts and numbers (quality and quantity) together while analyzing the events. Although it focuses more on qualitative analysis, in various required aspects quantitative data are also used.

Thus, these aspects ensure the readers and audiences that the present research is valid and reliable.

The following chapter analyze the theories and concepts used in the analyses of the present study.

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<sup>16</sup> a permission letter which allow a person or the villager to cut timber from the forest but it also limits how much cubic feet of timber one can get and till when one has to use it

## 4. Theory and Concepts

### 4.1 Introduction

The intention of conducting any empirical research is to search for a true knowledge or to explore the basic perceptions of the world, which is known as *ontology*- a theory of existence. It provides a basis for understanding the world (Holt-Jensen, 2004, p.125). Particularly, ontology (of social sciences) refers to the structure, mechanism and practices of the society (Ibid: 118). However, to acquire such real or true knowledge in a scientific way, we need the concepts or a theory, which is known as *epistemology*- a theory of knowledge. An epistemology guides us from the formulation of research project- from formulation of research question to analysis of the information- to conclude the research project. To make an epistemology applicable it must apply some concrete form by way of models or a programme, which is known as *methodology* (Ibid). Deduction, induction, and abduction are some of such models to apply the epistemology in a concrete way. Methodology further guides us to formulate the research project in a real and valid way. It gives us certain rules and regulations to make the project acceptable. Each methodology contains its own *methods*. Method contains specific rule and recommendation to collect, analyze and present the data regarding the research questions. A research method can be manipulated by applying different research *techniques* or it helps us to develop the techniques to carry out the research in the study area, such as interview, household survey, key informant interview, field conversation. The research technique can be applied in both *qualitative* and *quantitative* ways.

In searching for the answers to my research questions, this chapter introduces the theoretical stance of the present study, while previous chapter analyzed the methods and the techniques that applied to collect the empirical data from the fieldwork.

### 4.2 Livelihood

The lexical meaning of livelihood is *the way someone earns* which includes the money people need to pay for *food, a place to live, clothing, etc* (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>). However, nowadays, the concept of livelihood is becoming more elusive and this definition may not denote the entire concept of livelihood. Aase (to be published: 1) does not believe that livelihood only refers to the practices adapted by humans merely in order to survive in a strict biological sense, but in addition, it also needs the maintenance and even improvement of a certain *genre de vie* (way of life). According to Ouden (1977 quoted by Eyob, 1999: cited in Legesse, 2006: 52) a livelihood refers to individuals' and groups' strive to make a living, attempt to meet their various consumption and economic necessities, live with uncertainties, respond to new opportunities, and choose between different options. Chambers and Conway (1992: 7; cited in Ellis, 2000: 7) define livelihood as what 'comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and

activities required for a means of living'. According to Ellis (2000:10) a livelihood comprises the assets (human, natural, physical, social and financial capitals)<sup>17</sup>, the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by the individual or household. The present study considers that a livelihood refers to the combination of the activities (earning and resources accessibility of individual or household) to sustain and maintain biological, social, and cultural needs in a specific time and place.

To analyze the livelihood of Thini villagers, the following sections get theoretical and methodological insights from the livelihood concept postulated by Wolf in 1966. In order to grasp the changes in the pursuit of livelihood, the Local Dialectics Approach of Aase (1998) will be applied. Since the livelihood activities of the people of Lower Mustang region mostly relate with and rely on CPRs (Messerschmidt, 1986; Pyers, 1985; Vinding, 1998), some CPR theories have also been reviewed to broaden the analytical capacity.

Wolf's concept of livelihood focuses on the peasants' level of agricultural productions. He also believes that the peasants do not cultivate the land only to feed their family members, instead they also need to cultivate it to maintain social, cultural as well as religious necessities and to meet other requirements, such as rents and taxes. Aase (Ibid) postulates his approach to measure the changes in the society via local dialectics process in time-space context. The concepts provided by Wolf and Aase will be applied to analyze the livelihood of Thini villagers.

### **4.3 Peasants' Livelihoods**

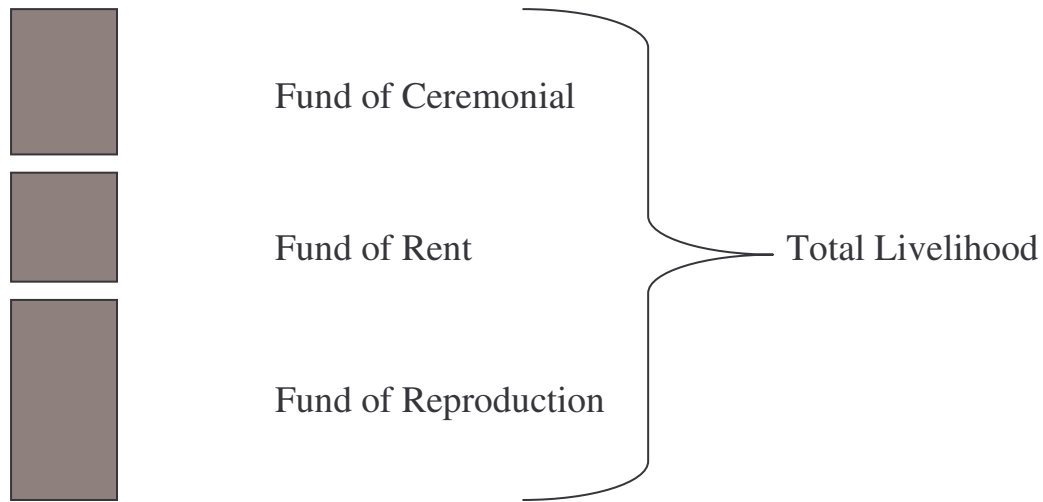
Eric R. Wolf (1966), an anthropologist, distinguishes peasants' pursuit of livelihood by framing them in different types of requirements of funds. He says that a peasant (*a rural cultivator*) is not evolving merely to produce grains to sustain his and his family's livelihood in a strict biological sense but he must also set aside time and value for several social as well as religious practices as a part of his and his family's survival. In other words, he also needs to produce a *surplus*. He further says that even those families who are self-sufficient in food and goods, must also entertain social relations with their fellows (Ibid: 7), that is why peasants may follow various strategies to sustain their livelihood such as the first to increase production and the second to curtail consumption (Ibid, p. 15). So, to meet all the needs (biological, cultural and social) a peasant may not be able to accumulate the funds from agriculture productions alone (Ibid, p. 37). Thus, he may need to accumulate other non-agricultural resources such as trade, goods or money, which

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<sup>17</sup> Human (skills, knowledge, good health); Social (social networks and associations as well as institutions in which people participate); Natural (land, forest, marine or wild resources, water and air quality); Physical (transport facilities, shelter and buildings, water supply and sanitation, and energy, as well as information and communication facilities, tools and equipments) and Financial (saving, loans, credits)

ultimately may force peasants to send an able-bodied son or daughter to seek wages outside (Ibid, p. 67).

**Figure 4. 1 Peasants' pursuit of livelihood (after E. Wolf 1966)**



Source: Adapted from Aase, 2007: 2 (To be published)

#### Fund of Reproduction

Fund of reproduction is the basic livelihood builder of any individual or household. It encompasses food, shelter and clothing, which are the most basic requirement of any household throughout the year. Moreover, an agrarian household must be able to store seeds for the next year crops and his/her livestock must produce offspring.

#### Fund of Rent

Fund of rent claims productions of surplus beyond the absolute biological necessities of the humans. The fund of rent is the expenses to cover the taxes of the state and - if the peasant does not own the land - rent to the landowner (cited in Aase, to be published: 2). Moreover, such rent could be paid in labour, in produce, or in money (Wolf, 1966: 9).

#### Fund of Ceremonial

As a part of peasant's pursuit of livelihood, ceremonial funds include the expenses on various festivals, religious practices, weddings and other kinds of similar activities within the society. Such expenses, actually, do not provide any physical quality and biological improvement in a person, if we consider it in a strict biological way, but as a social person one must bear these expenses to sustain and maintain their position in society. Wolf (Ibid, p. 7) says;

*“All social relations are surrounded by such ceremonial, and ceremonial must be paid for in labour, in goods, or in money if men are to participate in social relations.*

*Therefore, they must also work to establish a fund against which these expenditures may be charged. We shall call this the ceremonial fund.”*

Therefore, according to Wolf, a livelihood of an agrarian family has to supply a combination of fund of reproduction, fund of rent and fund of ceremonial. Thini villagers, believing in Buddhism, also mentioned me about various such realities and necessities as mentioned by Wolf in order to maintain the livelihood. Is Wolf’s way of understanding villagers’ livelihood relevant in the contexts of the present study? It has been analyzed in the sections 6.5 and 6.6, and figure 6.3 with the findings of the present study.

#### **4.4 Local Dialectics Approach**

Geography always talks about the changes in human actions and behaviour in space-time context. Innovation, diffusion of developments and infrastructure bring changes in local practices while making a living. For instance, villagers were managing natural resources since the historic past; however, after the introduction of ACAP in 1993 (in Jomsom), the customary system of resources management has changed. So, a question can be raised as to how the villagers have adapted in different time and context. What processes link or keep relation between their previous and recently modified traditions and changes?

Aase (1998) tries to seek a way of understanding the changes in the society. He believes societal changes take place interacting between *social organization* (practice, behaviour), *social structure* (norms, rules) and *culture* (meaning) over space and time in a dialectical process. His concept is known as local dialectics approach, which he calls a methodology to see the changes in the society or in a community, rather than ontology or epistemology. To measure the changes in the society, methodologically one must include societal *practice* (“objective reality”) and *meaning* (“social representation”) of that practice (Ibid), he further recommends.

Postulating his methodology to see the changes, he argues, practice is the observable phenomenon (what people do, e.g. sustain livelihood) which he calls *social organization*. Social practice of locals is also conditioned by local norms, rules and principles, this can be called *social structure* (e.g. local rules and regulations to manage CPRs). Social structure, thus, is created and maintained through social organization, and likewise, social organization is constrained and enabled through social structure. It is because social organization and social structure condition locals to stand upon a common understanding and follow the common norms and rules in the society. It is so because the participants in a social system find meaning in practicing the common rules. Aase (Ibid) denotes *culture* for such common meaning of the society.

Thus, *culture*, which contains meaning, is the basis for local norms, rules and principles, and these create a framework for how people organize their activities and actions (or what they do). In addition, culture also conceives the meaning of “the good life” and “genre de vie” (Ibid), for instance, a certain way of making a livelihood. Based on this theoretical grounding Aase (Ibid) postulates three levels of analyses to see the changes in the society in space-time context. His methodology constitutes *social organization*, *social structure* and *culture*, and the relationship between the levels is *dialectical* in a time-space context. He further argues that a cultural feature constituting the *thesis* for a certain practice at a certain time will appear as an *antithesis* at a later time and context (Ibid). A *synthesis* may become an action or event (practice or behaviour) for a particular space and time context, which may turn into a *thesis*, later it meets another *antithesis*. Thus, the process of dialectics between *thesis*, *antithesis* and, *synthesis* continue with changing time and space context. So, social changes must be seen in a dialectic interaction between what people do (practice) and how people conceptualize and categorize it (meaning) in the society in space-time context. Moreover, *social organization* (practice, behaviour) and *social structure* (norms, rules) may change with space-time context, however *culture* (meaning) of certain phenomenon or activities can exist even if social structure and practice are changed with similar space-time context. It is because that the cultural level of the dialectic process seems more durable than other two levels i.e. social structure and social organization (Ibid).

The changes in the pursuit of livelihood of the villagers in the present time-space context will be measured by the local dialectic approach of Aase. Likewise, changes in local people’s perception since the emergence of ACAP until now can also be measured by this approach. Thus, it is possible that once the structure and process of the society has changed it changes the livelihood activities of the villagers. This approach has been found suitable while analyzing the livelihood of the villagers in section 8.4.

#### **4.5 The Commons: An Introduction**

The *common* does not imply any kind of ownership. The resources exist in a common location may be claimed by an individual, or community, or the state. It is therefore possible of being overused or misuse of such resources as mentioned by Garret Hardin in his classic article “The Tragedy of the Commons” (1968). Thus, careful and sustainable management of such resources is necessary because many households depend on them (Agrawal, 2001: 1) to maintain and sustain their livelihood. Ostrom et al (1994: 4) define *commons* as the ability to exclude the users from its use. The most natural resources being consumed by the group of individuals or community can be classified as Common-Pool Resources (CPRs) (Ostrom, 2002: 1). Thus, it is necessary to make a distinction between *open-access common-pool resources* and *common property resources/regimes*. The major distinction between them is the property rights. The first does not



imply any kind of ownership (no property right of anyone) but it may be used or exploited by everybody, so, it may be exposed to the risk and possibility of over-exploitation and degradation. In short, there is not any kind of human formal and informal institution to manage and control it. Ostrom et. al (Ibid: 7) argue that it shares the characteristics with private goods the subtractability of resource units and with public goods the difficulties of exclusion. Bromley (1990: 20) considers there are no such common resources. There are, he argues, only resources controlled and managed as common property, or as state property, or as private property. The second, common property regimes theorists believe that there are some kinds of human involvement in a form of formal or informal institutions to manage and control it (Bromley, 1990; Osterm et.al, 1994; Agrawal, 2001; Agrawal, 2003). It exists and functions as private and state property regimes (Bromley, 1990: 3). It includes the sets of rules that define access, use, exclusion, management, monitoring, sanctioning, and arbitration behaviour of users with respect to specific resources (Schlager & Ostrom, 1992; cited in Agrawal, 2003: 244).

The present study considers common-pool resources of Thini villagers as common property resources/regimes, because the common resources which are consumed by Thini villagers, has been managed and controlled by themselves since the historic past. At present, it is managed by Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC), which is formed by Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP). By any means, the resources of Thini belong to a form of property, and they are managed and controlled either by villagers themselves or by others (for instance CAMC).

### **3.5.1 Theories on Common-Pool Resources**

After the publication of Hardin's article "*The Tragedy of the Commons*" in 1968, the epic of common-pool resource has begun. Presenting an example, Hardin argues, herdsmen always try to increase the numbers of cattle because of free access to the grazing land. His statement pessimistically denotes the misuse of common resources. In other words, profit gain by an individual herdsman, however, creates common problems (resources deficiency, pollution) to entire community or society. Thus, he suggests, before completely degrading of common resources it should either be privatized or managed and controlled by the state to sustain such resources (Ibid).

Although his article is very influential among the academicians, it has long been aptly criticized because of over-simplification of reality (Dietz, 2003: 1). Berkes et. al (1990: 12) criticize Hardin's article of being insightful but incomplete. Hardin (1968) conceptualized the common resources as open access common-pool resources, where he did not mention any institutional involvement to manage and control it. Later, he corrected his mistake by publishing another

article, namely, *Extensions of “the tragedy of the commons”* in 1998, where he explicitly mentioned that he has done the *weightiest mistake* in his article, “the tragedy of the commons” in 1968 by not using an adjective *unmanaged* in front of *commons* (or “unmanaged commons”). By correcting his previous mistake he says the “*the unmanaged commons would be ruined by overgrazing; competitive individualism would be helpless to prevent the social disaster*” (Hardin, 1998: 682).

The effect of Hardin’s model is widespread. Much development and environment policies in the world have been misguided by “the tragedy of the commons” model, and by the false assumption that common-property resources are open access resources (IFAD, 1995: 4).

Nevertheless, his article draws attention of a huge number of scholars because of two human factors that derive changes. First, increasing demand of the natural resources and environmental services, and dependency of huge numbers of population on such common resources for their livelihood. Second, the techniques applied by humans to manage and to make possible to use and reuse such resources, or the kinds of institutional arrangement that they have designed to manage them (Dietz et. al, 2003: 1). For instance, while issuing statement on global environment problems the 1992 Earth Summit, including Agenda 21 and the Desertification Convention, have strongly recommended active involvement of local and community participation for protecting CPRs (Holmberg, Thompson and Timberlake, 1993; cited in Leach et. al, 1999, 1).

Later, CPRs theorists have also designed different terms of conditions for sustainable management of the resources. Scholars such as Ostrom (1999) and Agrawal (2003) have developed different types of conditions to manage and govern CPRs in local level. They focus mainly on small size of a user group, a location close to the resource, homogeneity among group members, effective enforcement mechanism and past experiences of cooperation (Balad & Platteau, 1996: cited in Agrawal, 2003: 247). They have also discovered the regularities of successful management of CPRs, such as characteristics of resources, nature of groups that depend on resources, institutional regimes through which resources are managed, and the nature of the relationship between a group of external forces and authorities such as markets, state, and technology (Ibid).

The most famous and successful Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) approach gets its theoretical insights from the CPR theories. Mostly, CBNRM is designed as conditions postulated by various earlier CPR theorists, such as clearly defined boundary, homogeneity in groups, harmony, equal distribution of resources and balance between group members’ livelihood. However, at present, CPR theorists think differently than conventional understandings. Considering dynamism within community, Leach et.al (1999: 225) argue the role

of local institutions in managing CPRs as “*regularized patterns of behaviour between individuals and groups in society- in mediating environment-society relationship*”. Focusing weakness of earlier CPRs approach, Agrawal, et. al (1999: 629) mention that understanding “*local community as a small spatial unit, as a homogeneous social structure, and as shared norms*” in the management of CPRs is a weakness of these approaches.

### **3.5.2 Local Norms and Common-Pool Resources**

Previous studies regarding the local people of Manang valley of Manang (Aase et al. 2006) and Dolpo of Dolpa (Bauer, 2004) of Nepal recognize that while using CPRs, villagers readily obey societal rules and regulations. It may be because of their own embedded rules and regulations that are being followed since time immemorial in managing, controlling and distributing such resources, which also “*established structure of power and authority*” (Dasgupta, 1993: 208; cited in Sethi et al., 1996: 768) and the capacity to imply specific behavioural rules and paying for their enforcement (Ibid) within their society.

For instance, in Manang valley (East of Mustang) of Nepal, farmers plant and harvest on dates fixed by village headman who gets consulted by a *lama* (Buddhist priest), instead of spreading risk by extending the planting and harvesting seasons in order to avoid all crops being damaged (Aase et al, 2006: 1). Likewise, in Dolpo of Dolpa district (West of Mustang) individuals agree with their neighbours upon a set of enforceable rules and regulations that control households’ access to and use of community resources (Bauer, 2004: 53).

CPR theorists also realize the role and importance of local institutions in shaping human behaviour. Local norms influence while managing and controlling common resources because they facilitate and constrain their action and their property rights (Agrawal, 2003: 244). Once peoples realize their dependability on the CPRs, they create their own institutional arrangement that help them to allocate and distribute the resources and benefits equitably. They also manage it in a sustainable way over long time period with only limited efficiency losses (Agrawal, 1999; McKean, 1992; Ostrom, 1992; cited in Agrawal, 2001: 1). Ostrom et. al (1994: 5) explicitly argue that by devising their own rules-in-use, those who are depending on such CPRs overcome the “tragedy of the commons”.

Above theories and concepts will be applied in the analyses of livelihood in Thini from chapter 5 to 8. The next chapter analyzes various institutions of Thini, which are still influential in the society for making a living for the villagers.

## 5. Institutions: Resource and Accessibility

### 5.1 Introduction

While analyzing Thini villagers' livelihood, there are three aspects to be addressed. First, local institutions that shape villagers' livelihood with rules and regulations of access to and control over available CPRs. Second, villagers' pursuit of livelihood, which focuses on their various sources of earning while making a living. Third, a brief description of villagers' perception about ACAP and its help and hindrance for their livelihood. This chapter concerns the first aspect of the villagers' livelihood.

The institution contains rules and regulations, which Aase (1998) terms as *social structure*. The rules and regulations of the institution constrain and facilitate local practice or behaviour (for instance, livelihood) of the villagers, which can be termed as *social organization* (Ibid). Thus, social structure and social organization enable and shape the livelihood of the villagers. While dealing with rural people's livelihoods, an understanding of institutional processes is very essential because it helps to identify restrictions /barriers and opportunities with regard to make a living and mediates natural resource access (Scoones 1998:12, Ellis, et. al, 2004: 4). Thus, it plays a vital role in shaping local peoples' livelihood. In the case of mountain community, such as Thakali of Trans-Himalaya, institutions play a major role in the accessibility to the CPRs, which directly affect the villagers' livelihood. Thus, this chapter mostly focuses on the traditional categories of the villagers, institutions of Thini village and their functions to manage CPRs and livelihood of the villagers. Villagers' accessibility to the resources will also be analyzed in this chapter.

### 5.2 The Dwellers of Thini

The village *bahidar/sachib* (Secretary, *Dhungyuwa* in Tibetan- see section 5.3) keeps socio-religious and demographic records of the dwellers. His record is locally known as *Kuriya*. *Kuriya* is the collection of records such as name of permanent and temporary dwellers, various religious and social events and festivals of the village, schedules for voluntary work of the villagers, name of awarded and punished villagers. To obtain some social and religious status in community one must be recorded in the *Kuriya*, otherwise he or she is considered a *Mon* (a man from lowland) or *Phichepemhi* (outsider). He or she is also excluded from various social as well as religious ceremonies of the village. Some of the village responsibilities must be performed after becoming a member of *Kuriya*. Leach, M. et al (1999: 232) mention that such social differences and other aspects of social identity within a community also differentiate the access to and control over natural resources.

According to the village *Kuriya* they have four categories of dwellers in Thini. First, those households who reside in Thini since their ancestors. All the Thakali and some *Kami* and *Damai*<sup>18</sup> households belong to this category. This can be categorized as permanent dwellers of Thini. Second, the permanent *Lama* (Buddhist monk) of Thini who must bear religious responsibilities of the village can be categorized as permanent *lamas* of the village. Third, those in-migrated households who live in Thini as tenants. This group of dwellers can be categorized as temporary dwellers of Thini. Fourth category is the *Karmacharis*<sup>19</sup> and seasonal wage labourers. The following table presents the present dwellers (except the fourth category of the village) of Thini; the data of this table has been collected from the village *Kuriya* and the recent *Bahidar* (Gaja Bahadur Thakali) of Thini. The next section describes the categories of dwellers of Thini in different sub-sections.

**Table 5. 1 The Dwellers of Thini**

Caste/ Ethnic	Permanent Household								Temporary Household (social responsibility) Ward Nos.			
	Villagers (social responsibility)				Lama (religious responsibility)							
	Ward Nos.				Ward Nos.							
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Thakali	15	18	14	14	3	2	1	1				
Kami	2			1						2	1	1
Damai	2									1		
Gurung	1			3							1	1
Serpa	1											
Magar										1	1	
Mahat												1
Unknown												1
Total	21	18	14	18	3	2	1	1	0	4	3	4
Grand Total	71				7				11			
	<b>71+7+11= 89 households<sup>20</sup></b>											

Source: Field survey, 2007

### 5.2.1 The Permanent Dwellers

All the Thakalis and some of the occupational caste households, such as *Kami* and *Damai* are categorized as permanent dwellers of Thini. Those households who have land for cultivation and house in Thini are categorized as permanent dwellers. Thini is originally a Thakali village therefore there is none of Thakalis in temporary status. They also control all the positions of *gaun samiti* (GS or village committee, see section 5.3) and all other decision-making power in the

<sup>18</sup> Lower caste group of the village

<sup>19</sup> Villagers term *Karmachari* to all kinds of government personals such as civil servant, and schoolteacher

<sup>20</sup> The total recorded household of village *Kuriya* is less than the actual number of households of Thini during the fieldwork (there were 97 households during my fieldwork, see appendix 1). According to the *Bahidar*, some of the temporary households and *Karmacharis*' names have not included in *Kuriya* yet and some of them are in process of recording in village *Kuriya*.

village. The permanent dwellers are also responsible for regulating local culture and tradition, and to involve all the public works according to the GS decisions and these households must bear and follow all kinds of social responsibilities (see section 5.3).

### **5.2.2 The Permanent Lamas**

According to the village *kuriya*, the *lamas* (all are from Thakali community) who are responsible for *gumba* (monastery) are also categorized as permanent dwellers of Thini. They must bear all the religious responsibilities such as protecting religion and monastery, teaching Buddhist philosophy to the young *lamas* (students) and performing religious activities in the village. Their main sources of livelihood depend on earning from the *gumba*. *Lamas* can use the cash and grains donated by the villagers and outsiders during the worship in the monastery for making a living. They also use this earning to maintain the monastery. They are not responsible for various social/village activities such as public works, construction and maintenance of irrigation canal, construction of trails, or there is no compulsory for *lama* to participate in any kinds of labour (physically and monetarily) in the social activities (if they want they can involve). GS never charge any fine against the *lamas*. That is because, according to the informants, they are the caretaker of *gumba* and religion of Thini.

### **5.2.3 The Temporary Dwellers**

According to the village *Kuriya*, those households who do not own cultivating land and living in other's house are categorized as temporary dwellers of Thini. These households also must register in the *Kuriya* and must bear all the social responsibilities, however these dwellers cannot become the member of *gaun samiti* (village committee, see section 5.3) except serving as *chhowa* (villagers' messenger and caretaker of irrigation) of the village. Most of them are living in migrated villagers' houses as a caretaker of the house and land. Some of them are also living by renting the house. Some of the temporary dwellers are also living by hiring other cultivating land and house (of out-migrated and non-migrated villagers). These households pay some fixed amount of cash in yearly basis to the owner. However, those temporary households who have cultivating land (in rent or as a caretaker) must register in the *Kuriya* and physically involve in all the village activities as per the GS decisions.

### **5.2.4 The *Karmacharis* and Labourers**

Table 5.1 does not include the fourth category of dwellers of Thini village, which can be categorized as *Karmacharis* and Labourers. Those temporary villagers who do not have land and house in Thini and live by renting some rooms or a house in Thini belong to this category. During my fieldwork, there were four government schoolteachers. Two of them are living in Thini since ten years but they have not obtained status as permanent dwellers yet. According to them, if they

recorded themselves in *Kuriya*, villagers may impose more social responsibilities on them in addition to the responsibilities taken as government teachers. Likewise, villagers say that whatever the job or responsibility the *Karmacharis* hold they must follow and accept all the rules and regulations as other villagers, if they want to buy land or house in Thini, and want to be a permanent dweller of Thini.

It was difficult to find out total number of wage labourers in the village during daytime. According to one of my key informants and a local schoolteacher there might be about 10 labourers during my fieldwork. They work as agriculture labourer and mule driver of the villagers. Some of them also serve as porter in trekking tourism

The details of households' status, including households' infrastructures, have been tabulated in Appendix 1. The following sections describe how the local institutions function in regulating rules and regulation of village in order to sustain and maintain local CPRs and the livelihoods.

### **5.3 Local Institutions**

Local institutions are influential to manage and sustain local CPRs in order to sustain and maintain the local livelihoods (Bromley 1990; Dasgupta, 1993; Ostrom et. al 1994; Leach et. al 1999; Agrawal, 2001; Agrawal, 2003; Aase et al, 2006). The institutions of Thini can be classified as (a) the *gaun samiti* or village committee, (b) religious institutions, and (c) *shree jana mukti youth club* (a local level youth club). The first is main committee of the village, which constrains and facilitates villagers while using CPRs and making a living in the village. The second, although it belongs to the first category, it works and functions for the religious purposes separately. The third, though it is recently developed institution, works to uplift the villagers' livelihoods in the village. It also follows and respects the traditional institutions. The following sections describe them separately.

#### **5.3.1 The *Gaun Samiti* (Village Committee)**

Even before the inception of formal local governance in Thini, villagers had their own regulating system for CPRs and livelihood. They called it *Gaun Samiti* (GS or village committee). Traditionally, *Thuimi* (village headman; or *Mukhiya* in Nepali) heads *Gaun Samiti*. Only male members of the households could be member of GS. In every two years, they change the head of GS and exchange the members of GS.

The villagers themselves form *Gaun Samiti*. Actually, only Thakalis are in the committee and they make all the decisions. In the committee, they have two *Thuimis*, one *Bahidar* (village secretary, *Sachib* in Nepali) and four *Chhowas* (villagers' messenger and caretaker of irrigation, *Katuwal* in Nepali), representing one from each ward. Among four *Chhowas* one is selected as a

leader, called *Khepen*. All the villagers are considered to be general members of the *Samiti* (committee).

Villagers select two *Thuimis* from two major Thakali groups of Thini to balance their power. One is from *Thulo Phajan* (bigger clan) and another is from *Sano Phajan* (smaller clan)<sup>21</sup>. If one group selects older *Thuimi* the other selects younger as a *Thuimi*. Later, among them, one senior and experienced would be selected as a main chief of the village or *Thuimi* and the other remains as a chief but less active than the first one. Informants told me that if one *Thuimi* makes any mistake or if they find monopoly of *Thuimi* in decisions or found unable to perform his duties and responsibilities (albeit it has never happened in Thini) they might consult or cross check with next *Thuimi*. In this way, they can balance and run the society smoothly.

*Thuimi* makes final decision for all kinds of conflict and program within the village. He also attends various kinds of meeting representing village outside Thini. There is no formal salary in terms of money to the chief but he gains social status as a respected person in the society. He should not necessarily involve in any kind of public/community works of the village. Before inception of local political party system, institutions and rules, *Thuimi* and local *Gaun Samiti* used to run the society. Almost the same tradition has continued even after local elected bodies of Nepal Government (Village Development Committee, VDC) dissolved in July 2002 due to Maoist insurgency and political instability in the nation. Now, VDC secretary (government employ) implements development programmes as well as the rules and regulations of government with the consultation of local chief of the village. The tradition is still followed in the region because there are no elected political members in VDC yet. Thus, the value of *Thuimi* is realized and he has gained more respect in local level.

*Bahidar* (secretary of GS) keeps the records, such as economy of the village, rewards and punishment, permanent and temporary households and social and cultural programmes of the village. He is also responsible to keep the minute of various meetings of GS. His record is locally known as *Kuriya*. Furthermore, all the head of the households (of 18-60 years old) must be recorded in *Kuriya* because from this record they select next *Thuimi*, *Bahidar* and *Chhowa* for the village. If head of the household dies or crosses 60 years of age, his son of 18-60 years old replaces him in *Kuriya*. *Bahidar* is also responsible to convey the decision made by GS to the *Chhowas*, and then *Chhowas* convey to all the villagers. He is also responsible to manage the

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<sup>21</sup> Villagers told me that the Thakalis of Thini are the generations or families of two clans. According to the number of family members, they have divided one group as bigger family group or *thulo phajan* and another group as smaller family group or *sano phajan* since past time. At present, all the Thakalis of Thini belong either to bigger clan or to smaller clan.



necessary labour forces for all kinds of public works within the village, for instance, if the village needs to construct a small bridge in the local river, it is not necessary to call all the villagers to participate in the construction of the bridge. In this case, GS decides who should come and who should not in the alternative basis according to the names listed in the *kuriya*. GS also decides ranges of fine or penalty (Rs. 50 to 500<sup>22</sup> per day) if someone does not participate in the work. *Bahidar* informs to *Chhowas* who are going to participate for particular work in the particular date and *Chhowas* inform those villagers who are going to participate in the actual work. *Bahidar* keeps the records who participate and who do not, and who should come for the next time. At present, he gets Rs. 1500 per year as a salary. In earlier time, *Bahidar* had to bear all the responsibilities (as social mandatory responsibilities) free of cost but at present, they have changed the rules. GS considers that the works allocated to *Bahidar* are tough and he must devote his time to keep the *Kuriya* up-to-date. That is why they have put aside some amount of money to *Bahidar*. However, there is no salary in terms of money to other members of the GS.



**Photo 5. 1 Public participation to construct bridge on local river (Ghang Kyu) of Thini**

*Chhowas* are the messenger of village (or of GS), and are also responsible for the irrigation water (distribution of irrigation water and maintenance of the canal) of the village. All the households must work as *Chhowa* at least one time in their lifetime (often it would be more than one time). Villagers select four *Chhowas* at once, two from each clan because *Chhowas* also have many responsibilities for the villagers and GS. They believe, if they distribute the workload among four it would be easy and they can perform all the responsibilities smoothly and timely. The leader of the *Chhowas*, called *Khepen*, decides who should go for which kind of work in which day, for instance they divide the workload according to the days Sunday to Saturday (eg. *Chhowa1* in Sunday, *Chhowa2* in Monday ... etc.). Each year, other four new *Chhowas* replace all the four old *Chhowas*. If any villager denies to work as *Chhowa*, he must pay to transfer his responsibilities of *Chhowa* for that particular year to another villager. It is expensive to transfer

<sup>22</sup> 1 US dollar = approximately Rs. 64-65 during the fieldwork

the responsibilities of *Chhowa*. Nowadays, it costs about 15,000-20,000<sup>23</sup> Nepali Rupees per year. Especially those out-migrated households, whose land and house are still in Thini but none of their family members are living in Thini, transfer the responsibilities of *Chhowa* to another villager. It is because their assets are still in Thini. If one has such fixed and permanent assets in Thini, GS decides to bear such responsibilities accordingly (as per the turn fixed in the *kuriya*). Some informants mentioned me that at present, it is difficult to sustain *Chhowas* system in Thini because on the one hand, young and active villagers are eager to migrate outside, on the other hand old and aged villagers may not bear such responsibilities as actively as young do.

Villagers have constructed a reservoir (Southeast from the village) to collect the water coming from the mountain. *Chhowas* have to go up to start and close the irrigation canal during the cultivation period because during this period they need more water. It remains open during rest of the year. Villagers must wait her/his turn to use the water. If anyone misuses the turn, she/he must pay the penalty, which range most of the time Rs. 50-500. Villagers also use the canal water to clean the clothes, utensils and even to clean dirt of the livestock, (I observed these activities during the fieldwork).

As mentioned earlier, *Chhowas* are also the messenger of the decisions made by GS and caretaker of irrigation water in the village. They decide that from which agricultural fields the distribution of irrigation water should start (of course, they start from upper cultivation land to lower cultivation land). All the main cultivable fields of Thini have unique names (see appendix 3) such as *tep*, *bhumcha*, *mori* ... etc. Based on those names they regulate the irrigation water. For instance, if *chhowa* starts irrigation from the land named *tep* then all the villagers whose agriculture fields surround or near from *tep* come to their fields and share the water in their agricultural fields equitably.

*Chhowas* also have to convey the necessary messages, such as day of the meetings, day of the festivals, starting day of irrigation water from particular land and other social and religious events and ceremonies to the villagers according to *Bahidar*'s minutes or records. Although there is no salary to *Chhowa*, twice a year they get 5/5 *Mana*<sup>24</sup> of *Karu* and buckwheat from all the households of Thini during harvesting time, which they equally distribute among them including *thuimi* or chief. Besides this, they also collect some money by accumulating fines (or penalties) if villagers' livestock graze in the cultivated lands. The penalty varies in day and night. If livestock grazes during day-time, it costs Rs.20 and during the night-time, it costs Rs. 40 per livestock. But

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<sup>23</sup> However, if temporary residence especially Karmacharis and wage labors, those who are registered in the village *Kuriya*, want to transfer the responsibilities of *Chhowa* to another villager it cost about 40,000-50,000 (negotiable) for lifetime. It means, he does not need to bear the responsibilities of *Chhowa* in his lifetime again or during the stay in Thini, if he pays that sum of money to GS.

<sup>24</sup> 1 *Mana* = approximately 0.5 Kilogram, but measurement of *Mana* varies region to region in Nepal

if villagers' livestock graze in the apple plantation fields, it costs Rs. 100 (day or night) per livestock. The amount collected from various penalties is distributed among the *Chhowas* as a salary or as a reward.

In addition, it is obligatory to all the dwellers of Thini to accept and perform the responsibilities given by the GS. Therefore, becoming *Thuimi*, *Bahidar* and *Chhowa* are the mandatory community work for all the villagers. These are obligatory responsibilities of the villagers, which must be performed in alternative basis among villagers (head of the households). Every household must set aside some time for such common works as *social surpluses* (Wolf, 1968) and as a part of their livelihood earning.

### **5.3.2 Religious Institutions**

Although GS also makes, remakes and regulates the rules to organize and perform religious ceremonies in the village, they have separate traditional groups of male and female in Thini especially for the performance and continuation of religious ceremonies and festivals in the village. They call *Dharo* for the male group of the village, and *Uiimen* for the female group of the village. All the males and females of from 18 to 60 years old are automatically enrolled in *Dharo* and *Uiimen*. Historically, both groups formed to continue and practice cultural and religious activities in the village, but now they also involve in various construction as well as development activities. They select senior and influential (often from rich and high status Thakali household) male and female of village as the chief of each group, and rest of the villagers (of 18-60 years old) become members of *Dharo* and *Uiimen*.

The members of *Dharo* provide necessary help for the village and villagers during the festival time. When females are in fasting or involved in some kinds of religious activities, members of *Dharo* look after households' works and provide necessary helps, for instance cooking for the feast, bringing large quantity firewood from the forest, for the female members. Likewise, while males are involving in some kinds of religious functions, members of *Uiimen* look after households' works and provide food and locally made alcohol (known as *raksi*) to the members of *Dharo*. At present, both groups also involve in various construction as well as awareness and local developmental programmes. Informants told me that the idea of *Aama Samuha* (Mothers' group) and *Buba Samuha* (Fathers' group) of Nepal may have been taken from *Dharo* and *Uiimen* system of Thakali (of Thini).

### 5.3.3 Shree Jana Mukti Youth Club

Instead of traditional institutions, the energetic Thakali youths of Thini have also established a club in Thini in *Bikram Sambat* (BS)<sup>25</sup> 2055 (1997/98 AD), which is named as *Shree Jana Mukti Yuwa Club* (Shree Jana Mukti Youth Club), Thini, Mustang, 2055. The youths of clubs are aware to protect and continue their culture and traditions. They also follow the rules and regulations of GS. Although the members of the club belong to either in *Dharo* or in *Uiimen*, they help to organize some village level games and festivals, such as *Taro Hanne Khel* (arrow shooting game) and religious and social activities within the village. Likewise, the youths have also worked a lot to introduce television cable network in the village. At present, they have seven channels (4 Nepali and 3 Hindi channels). Recently, they have also bought three computers to create awareness of computer education among educated youths and the rest of the villagers. Though older villagers are not interested in computer education, they are positive whatever their children are doing.

### 5.4 Common-Pool Resources (CPRs) of Thini

The resources of the Thini village can be grouped as forest, water and pastureland, which the present study has termed as Common-Pool Resources (CPRs). These are essential resources for agriculture activities and livestock rearing in the region in particular and in the Trans-Himalayan regions in general.

The agriculture fields of Thini are owned as private property by the individual villagers. The villagers have to pay taxes of the land owned by them to the government annually (see section 6.3). In the past time, Thini used to have huge coverage of forestland. The villagers still remember the names of past-time forest, such as *Panch-Gaunle Ban*, *Chhatra Ban*, *Tikhelumtha Ban*, *Thongko Nha*, *Dhochyang*, *Ghaitong*, *Womang*, *Natang Thang*, *Ghyuli Ghang*, *Kaisang* and *Namu Ghang*. Pyers (1985: 115) mentions that most of the larger timber for local use comes from the forest in the vicinity of Thini and Marpha. However, at present, they are using *Kaisang Ban*, which is located East from Thini (3600 masl) and the forest located on the base of Nilgiri Himal (Nilgiri Mountain). Some of Thini's natural resources are in inaccessible location since they are located North from Nilgiri Himal.

According to the informants, some of the previous forest coverage areas are deforested or used and in some of the cases, the rights to use are transferred to the surrounding villages. Pyers (Ibid: 116/118) has mentioned the causes of decrease in forest resources in the Thak khola region. He says that native medicinal herb sources were depleted and forests were heavily cut to provide fuel

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<sup>25</sup> Bikram Sambat (BS) is a Nepali Year of Calendar which is approximately 57 years (it is about 56 years, 8 months and 16 days) elder than the Christian Calendar Anno Domini (AD).

and timber for the *Khampa*<sup>26</sup> soldiers and Tibetan refugees. Besides these factors, he also claims that immigration from harsher regions of Upper Mustang and Upper Dolpa to the Thak Khola regions, increment of pilgrims to Muktinath<sup>27</sup>, and the development of tourism activities are responsible for the decrease in the forest resources (Ibid).

Villagers use outskirts of forest and open areas as pastureland for their livestock. The fresh melting water comes from the mountains, which villagers use for dinking and irrigation purpose. Villagers constructed an irrigation canal long ago for the irrigation purpose.

## **5.5 Accessibility and Management of Common-Pool Resources (CPRs)**

### **5.5.1 From Traditional to Modern Management**

After the emergence of ACAP in 1993 (in Jomsom), the process of transferring rights to manage CPRs has changed from traditional system (*thuimi system*) to CAMC (Conservation Area Management Committee) system. In spite of this change, villagers use CPRs in the way they were used before the existence of ACAP. In the case of Thini, the management committee has changed but villagers still like to follow the traditional management techniques. It seems like that only the rights to collect income from forest and decision-making power to use the money have gone to CAMC. Thus, villagers' traditional management system of CPRs is very important even in the present context.

According to ACAP, the main target of the transformation of rights from traditional management system to CAMC management system is to train the local people about conservation and utilization of natural resources for the sustainable use, and to create the awareness about the importance of natural resources for their livelihood. Therefore, the following sections introduce in brief the CPRs management systems of *gaun samiti* i.e. village committee and CAMC i.e. Conservation Area Management Committee respectively.

#### Traditional Management of CPR by *Gaun Samiti* (GS)

The *Gaun Samiti* (GS or village committee) was a responsible body to make, remake and implement the rules and regulations in order to use CPRs within the village. The permanent dwellers (villagers and lamas) had access to available CPRs according to GS rules. Among temporary dwellers, those households who had cultivable land, either as rented/hired or as sharecropping or as a caretaker of out-migrated households' assets (land and house) had also access to the CPRs. According to GS rules, those households who had cultivable land and were living in Thini must register in the village *Kuriya* for which they got access to the CPRs. The

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<sup>26</sup> Tibetan freedom fighter

<sup>27</sup> A famous Hindu temple located in Muktinath (3810 masl) of Mustang district

temporary dwellers, such as *Karmacharis* and wage labourers as well as other temporary visitors did not have access to local resources. If those dwellers wanted to use such resources (for instance firewood, fodder and grass), they had to buy from the villagers.

GS completely prohibited cutting live trees from the forest; if someone did, GS fined her/him. The penalty was in cash. The penalty varied as per the quality and use of tree. Based on the quality and use of the tree, GS decided Rs 500-10,000 as fine for each person. Instead, villagers had full access to collect firewood (of dried/dead/fallen trees only), fodder, grass, and mushroom whenever they wanted. Moreover, if villagers needed even the live trees for religious, public purpose and for the welfare of the village, such as construction of common house for the villagers, maintenance of irrigation canal, construction of bridge on the river, construction of monastery and temple, they could request *thuimi*. *Thuimi* could permit the villagers or he could also permit the *bahidar* to allocate some labour forces from the *Kuriya* to bring the needed timbers from the forest. Likewise, in case of emergency or if a villager needed the timber to construct or to maintain his/her house, *thuimi* might permit her/him to cut the timber from the forest as per the rate determined by the GS, if he/she requested *thuimi*. In most of cases while using forest, *thuimi* could decide without asking any member of GS but in case of logging and cutting live trees from the forest, GS decided the ranges of fine, and *thuimi* and GS might request for the consultation or suggestion from other villagers, *Dharo* and *Uiimen*.

There was no restriction to graze livestock in the forest and in open spaces of surrounding village and forestland. After harvesting, villagers also grazed livestock in their own land. However, villagers did not prefer to graze in the cultivable land because GS has fixed some fines if livestock grazed others' crops. In the summer, villagers left their livestock in the forest and in the open areas. Sometimes, some of livestock returned home even after a week from the forest. In the winter season, though villagers tried to collect green fodder and grass from their land and forest, it was difficult to collect them because of severe cold and snowfall in the upland areas, so they used dried straw of *karu*, buckwheat, barley and wheat for their livestock.

#### Modern Management of CPR by Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC)

CAMC is formed by Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) to manage and sustain local natural resources in regards to local peoples' livelihood. ACAP works with CAMC. CAMC is the grass-root committee of the project that plans, implements, manages and controls the conservation and developmental programmes at the Village Development Committee (VDC) level. According to the Conservation Area Management Act (CAMA), 2053 BS (1995/96), CAMC is a unit of 15 members. 9 of them are from each ward (a VDC contain 9 wards, this is also the lowest autonomous political unit of Nepal). VDC chairperson (presently all the VDC

level committees are dissolved in Nepal, so VDC secretary, also a government employee, has replaced the VDC chairperson in CAMC) is considered as an ex-officio member of CAMC, and 5 other members are selected by conservation officer of ACAP from the same VDC.

ACAP considers that CAMC has three main dimensions; first, after the formation of CAMC they can reduce the heavy cost of involving army personnel for safeguarding the protected areas. Instead, they can use the money in various developmental and conservation programmes to secure and sustain local peoples' livelihood through Integrated Conservation and Development Programmes (ICDP). Second, CAMC can utilize communities' indigenous knowledge and skill for the effective management of the natural resources. Third, local community can use the CPRs by involving themselves in CAMC (Gurung, 2003: 4).

CAMC is authorized to collect and utilize revenue; it can collect user fees for timber, royalties of some of the commercially harvested forest products, and common resources user fees from community land- users. It is also authorized to distribute a permission letter for timber (known as *Poorji*). The *Poorji* is supposed to be distributed each year, but in Jomsom VDC it has not been distributed for 7-8 years. According to the Conservation Area Management Act, 2053 BS, CAMC can call for *Poorji* as per the requirement of the villagers.

Thini villagers have easy access to collect firewood of dried, dead, and fallen trees, to collect fodder and to graze their livestock in the open spaces and even within the forest-covered land, but for the timber, they must get permission from CAMC. Even in the case of emergency (if someone's house is damaged or need to be reconstructed), he/she must request and get permission from CAMC. However, in the similar kind of case in *Thuimi* system, villagers could request *Thuimi* and *Thuimi* might permit him/her to get the timber as per the nature of the case. CAMC is more flexible for timber for the public, developmental and religious purposes in the villages.

CAMC is launching their conservation-cum-development programmes in the villages by respecting local institutions and their rules and regulations. CAMC is also trying to follow the traditional *thuimi* system while using CPRs among the villagers. CAMC chief who is also from the Thini village and other members of the committee decide when and how the *Poorji* should be distributed, and how the collected money should be used. Some villagers consider that CAMC system is similar to *thuimi* system and some say that *thuimi* system was better than CAMC system in the management of CPRs. The satisfaction and dissatisfaction of villagers regarding ACAP as well as CAMC will be discussed in the chapter eight.

## 5.6 Summary with some Discussions

Before analyzing earning sources of the villagers, this chapter analyzed the local institutions, because they shape and channelize villagers' behaviour to choose a way of living. The rules and regulations of the local institutions determine the control, access to and use of local resources. Agrawal (1997: 441) mentions that local communities can create and sustain local institutions to manage their collectively owned resources quite successfully. Different categories of dwellers of the village have different level of the accessibility to the local resources. *Gaun Samiti* (GS or village committee) is the main regulating body to implement rules and regulations in the village, to manage local resources, to continue local culture and tradition, and to resolve conflicts. *Bahidar* and *Chhowas* have fixed tasks that must be performed smoothly and timely. *Bahidar* must keep all kinds of records, such as economy of the village, different categories of dwellers, record of conflicts and rewards/punishment etc. *Chhowas*, on the other hand, regulate the common water among the villagers and inform the villagers about *Gaun Samiti's* decisions. In fact, all the villagers must bear the social responsibilities of the decisions made by *Gaun Samiti*.

Those households who have land and house in Thini have access to the CPRs. Those households who have been living in Thini since their ancestors (especially Thakalis) consider the CPRs as their own property (because it is the main sources for their agricultural activities and livestock rearing). In contrary, wage labourers, *Karmacharis* and other seasonal visitors do not have rights to use such resources. In case of need, they must consult with villagers and *Thuimi*, and they must buy resources such as firewood and fodder from the villagers. Outsiders are completely prohibited to leave their livestock in the forest and to collect fodder, vegetables and herbs from the forest.

The institutions that I have explained above are one of the main aspects of the villagers' livelihood. If one wants to live in the village, one must accept the rules and regulations made by the villagers. Wolf's (1968) conception of *social surpluses* and Aase's (1998) belief of maintenance and even improvement of certain *genre de vie* (way of live) also indicate these kinds of socially mandatory tasks that must be fulfilled by the villagers. The livelihood of these people is not limited only to the fulfilment of their biological needs for mere survival; instead, mandatory religious (participation in *Uiimen* and *Dharo*), ceremonial (marriage, festivals) and social responsibilities (*Thuimi*, *Bahidar*, *Chhowas*, *lamas* and participation in the public work) of them that are given by the society, must be included. In the case of Thini, their livelihood earnings include these social and religious institutions as an important aspect (or asset).

The new management committee, namely CAMC is also trying to follow the traditional management system. Without respecting customary practices and uses of natural resources, it is



difficult for the CAMC to launch their conservation-cum-development programmes in the village, because villagers consider CPRs as their own property in which they have full rights to access since their ancestors. The present chief of CAMC is from Thini village. Being a Thini villager and according to the village rules, he must respect *Thuimi* and *Kuriya* system, which is still very influential. CAMC is formed to manage natural resources but he must follow village rules and regulations, such as he must become the member of the *Kuriya*, he must work as *Thuimi*, *Bahidar*, *Chhowa* and he must participate in the public works.

The next chapter will analyze the livelihood earning activities of the villagers.

## 6. Livelihood Activities of the Villagers

### 6.1 Introduction

Ellis (2000:10) defines a livelihood as comprising “*the assets, the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by the individual or household.*” Thus, the shape and channel of earning sources of an individual is determined by his/her social position, which is constrained and facilitated by the institutions. In the previous chapter, I analyzed the conditions for social position of an individual household, which also explained the variations of dwellers in the case of resource accessibility. This chapter, based on previous chapter, analyzes the livelihood earning activities of the villagers. Considering earning sources is one of the most important aspect of villagers’ livelihood, this chapter analyzes the subsistence economy of the villagers, which includes major livelihood earning activities, their need of cash income and how they earn the cash income for various livelihood requirements. Finally, the concept of three funds, i.e. *fund of reproduction*, *fund of rent* and *fund of ceremonial* (Wolf, 1966) will be related with the analyses of present and previous chapters.

### 6.2 Livelihood Pursuits

I found that villagers categorize the well-being of a household according to the construction materials used in the house. In Thini, there are three types of houses i.e. (a) cemented, (b) wood, stone and soil (*bhangdi*), and (c) wood and soil (*ghyanga*). They categorize those household who have cemented house as rich class, those who have *bhangdi* as medium class and those who have *ghyanga* as poor class. Considering their house classification, among interviewed households, 14 per cent have cemented house, 82 per cent have *bhangdi* house and 4 per cent have *ghyanga* house.

A household is the primary unit of consumption and production in Thini. The total number of able-bodied or adult members of the household determines income-generating capacity of that particular household. It is so because the children of less than 15 years old consume as much as their parents but they cannot produce as much as their parents do. Likewise, a mother with a baby cannot generate income (because she has to do more reproductive work (Aase, 1985: 36)) as a mother of without baby. Thus, the ability of a household to generate income for their livelihood requirements not only depends on the quantity and quality of land and accessibility to and availability of CPRs, it is also determined by the degree of available household labour (Bishop, 1990: 186). In addition, the villagers also have mandatory social responsibilities, such as working as *chhowa*, *bahidar*, *thuimi* and participating in public works that must be performed according to decisions of the *gaun samiti* (GS or village committee). For such kinds of works it needs able-bodied household members and for which they must put aside their valuable time.

Females of Thini have vital role in generating income. They do not have social mandatory task to perform as men have in the village, though, females also need to put aside sometime if *uimen* calls for the participation in some religious ceremony in the village. Instead, they work in the fields, they take care of house and babies, and they run *bhatti* (tavern) in their house. It can be said that female have an importance role for generating households' livelihood requirements in the Thini village.

Children of 10-15 years have partial economic value in the village. At present, most parents send their children to school. Children help their parents during their vacation, and morning and evening time of before and after the school. They help their parents by carrying tea and *raksi* (locally made alcohol) to the fields, taking care of siblings, guarding the house during the absence of parents and sometime working as herders. Aged villagers have also economic value in the case of Thini. I met and talked with all the aged villagers (they were four during my fieldwork) who belong to 70-81 years old age group. They are actively involving to generate income for their family. Their able-bodied sons and daughters are migrated but these aged persons of village still take care of their assets in Thini.

Some adult villagers are migrated in the pursuit of education and jobs. Most of them are settled (temporary and permanent) in other regions of the nation, while a few of them also are settled abroad, such as Japan and America.

In the pursuit of family's livelihoods, both men and women work hard and long in a day during cultivation. Men plough the land and women sow the grain; women carry the manure to the field, men prepare the fields and do the irrigation. In addition, animals are unavoidable means for the villagers to make a living because they plough the fields and they carry the load (firewood, fodder and grass). Villagers also get milk, meat, wool, and manure for their agriculture fields from their animals.

The following sections analyze the major economic activities of the villagers for their livelihoods.

### 6.2.1 Agriculture

Agriculture is the main economic activity of Thini. Although villagers have access to irrigation for all the cultivable fields, they have divided the agriculture fields into two types based on types of productions. Those fields which are being cultivated for crops and vegetables productions, such as *karu*, wheat, barley, buckwheat, potato, and various types of vegetables, are categorized as *le* (*khet* in Nepali). Those fields which are being cultivated to plant apple trees, are categorized as *bhar* (*bari* in Nepali). Most villagers construct the wall or fence (mud, stone, wood, or mix) around the *bhars* because it protects the apple plants from the wind. Villagers also call *bikas* (lit. development) for apple planted fields. In addition, the agriculture fields of Thini have unique names (see appendix 3). With the help of these names, *chhowa* distributes the water for irrigation in the agriculture fields (see previous chapter).



**Photo 6.1: Some agriculture fields of Thini**

The following figures show the agriculture calendar<sup>28</sup> of Thini;

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<sup>28</sup> Winter and summer agriculture calendars are based on the information given by a key informant



Harvesting of winter crops start in early June and last until July. Immediately after harvesting winter crops, villagers prepare, plough and irrigate the land for buckwheat, maize and beans. Villagers use traditional agriculture tools for their agricultural activities. Mostly villagers sow the fields by a woman walking behind the ploughman dropping grains into the furrow. A ploughman ploughs the



**Photo 6.2 Some agriculture tools**

fields by pairs of *Jhopas* (cross of livestock i.e. cow with *yak* or ox with *nak* (female *yak*)). During the cultivation period of *karu* and barley in the winter, villagers also plant and harvest garlic. During the summer, villagers grow the vegetables. Most of the villagers cultivate vegetables for their household use only; however, some villagers also grow it to sell.

After harvesting winter crops in June/July, *thuimi* calls a meeting of GS to find out suitable date to sow buckwheat (*ghepe*) with the consent of village lama (Buddhist priest). No one sows buckwheat before the date declared by the *thuimi*. For the year 2007, it was declared Wednesday 27 June 2007 (13 *Ashad* 2064 *BS*) as the date to sow buckwheat in Thini. Then, the summer cultivation starts. GS fixed the date to sow only for *karu* and buckwheat in Thini, but villagers can sow other crops as per their wish.

*Karu* is the most produced grain in Thini. Buckwheat is 2<sup>nd</sup> and potato, maize and barley are 3<sup>rd</sup> most produced crops in Thini. Most households cultivate *karu* and barley at the same time. At present, villagers also plant apple in their fields (*bhar*).

According to a schoolteacher, about 80 per cent of *karu* goes to make *raksi* and remaining to make *satu* (flour of parched *karu*). The households themselves consume most of the agricultural productions (grain and vegetable). Maize is mainly consumed by the horses (those who keep horses). Villagers also sell some of their agricultural productions and locally produced goods for the cash income, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Cultivation of the grains also depends on the land (*le*) owned by the households. According to the informants, a household with 5-7 members need at least 7 *les* to produce the crops all round the year (in case there is no sudden climatic and geologic change occur). Among interviewed households, 32 per cent have less than 3 *les*, 42 per cent have 4-6 *les*, 24 per cent have more than 7 *les* and 2 per cent households do not have any *les*.

Thus, most of the villagers lack sufficient *les* to produce the crops as per their requirement, whereas only 24 per cent meet the requirement. In addition, the production of the crops also depends on climate and temperature variability.

#### Agricultural Productions Insufficiency

Though agriculture is the basic livelihood earning activity of the villagers, only a handful of the villagers are able to harvest crops to feed their family members for all round the year. The following table support this assertion,

**Table 6. 1 Agriculture Production sufficiency and insufficiency of the Households**

Caste/Ethnic affiliation	Agriculture Productions sufficiency and insufficiency of Households				Total	%
	Less than 3 months	3 months to 6 months	6 months to 9 months	All round the year		
Damai	0	1	1	0	2	4.0
Gurung	1	1	0	1	3	6.0
Kami	1	1	0	0	2	4.0
Magar	0	1	0	0	1	2.0
Sherpa	0	1	0	0	1	2.0
Thakali	3	15	11	12	41	82.0
Total	5	20	12	13	50	100.0
%	10.0	40.0	24.0	26.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2007

Above table reveals – which is also the main source of the *fund of reproduction*- that amongst surveyed households only 26 per cent have sufficient agricultural productions to feed their family all round the year. 10 per cent can subsist less than 3 months, 40 per cent can subsist 3 to 6 months, and 24 per cent can f subsist 6 to 9 months in a year. Thus, it can be said that most villagers lack to generate sufficient *fund of reproduction* from agriculture alone. These households have also mentioned that they lack cash income for other needs, such as food, health, education, religious ceremonies, marriage and other kind of festivals in the society. Thus, they lack to generate sufficient *fund of ceremonial* too.

Livestock rearing is another most important activity of households' livelihood pursuit, which facilitates in agricultural activities and helps to fulfil the requirements of the households.

### **6.2.2 Livestock**

Livestock rearing is an integral component of an agrarian family. Thini villagers rear livestock for two purposes, first to support in the agricultural cultivation (eg. to plough, manure, and to transport), and second for the cash income (eg. sale of meat, egg, milk). Villagers keep cattle such

as cow, ox and *jhopa*<sup>30</sup> as a part of their agricultural activities while sheep, goat, chicken and mule are to generate cash income. Some households also keep horses for transportation. Those households who keep sufficient livestock can be considered that they find easier to make a living in comparison to those households who keep less livestock.

**Table 6. 2 Price and Use of Livestock in Thini**

Animal	Price of live animal (in Rs.)	Name in Thakali language	Uses
1 Horse	10,000-35,000	<i>Ta</i>	To transport the people, horses are very expensive animals but at present, the price of a horse is decreasing day by day. One of the Thini villagers has bought a horse in Rs. 250,000, which is still in Thini village
1 Jhopa	15,000-18,000	<i>Jho</i>	Use for various agricultural purposes and to carry the loads. Extensively used animal in Thini
1 Mule	32,000-50,000	<i>Tari</i>	To carry the loads
1 male goat	5,300-6,000	<i>(Khasi) Ra</i>	Use for meat and cash income
1 female goat	2,000-2,500	<i>Ra</i>	For cash income, meat and milk
1 Chicken	500-600	<i>Naka Mom</i>	For meat and cash income
1 Cock	900-1,200	<i>Naka Bhale</i>	For meat and cash income
1 Cow	1,000-2,000	<i>Mhe</i>	For milk and manure
1 Yak	23,000-27,000	<i>Hya (yak) and Pri (nak)</i>	At present, villagers do not keep yaks as domestic animals, although they eat its meat, therefore, they must buy the meat of yak from other (mostly they buy it from the Lobas <sup>31</sup> and Tibetans)
1 Sheep	2,300-4,500	<i>Ghyu</i>	For meat and cash income, only few households rear sheep in Thini

Source: Field Survey, 2007

Among total cows of Thini, Thakali hold 81 per cent, Gurung hold 6 per cent, and Damai, Kami, Magar and Sherpa hold 3 per cent respectively. 75 per cent of *Jhopas* belong to Thakali, 2 per cent belong to Gurung and Kami, and 4 per cent belong to Damai, Magar and Sherpa. Among cash generating livestock, Thini villagers keep mule, chicken and sheep. Among total mules, Thakali have 90 per cent and Gurung have 10 per cent while other ethnic groups such as Damai, Kami, Magar and Sherpa do not have mule in their house. Likewise, more than 78 per cent of chickens belong to Thakalis while Gurung and Kami have 6 per cent for each and Damai, Magar and Sherpa have 3 per cent for each. Only, three ethnic groups, namely Thakali, Magar and Damai rear sheep that are 52, 38 and 10 per cent respectively. Amongst total horses of interviewed households, Thakalis have 83 per cent, Gurung have 17 per cent and other ethnic groups do not own horses.

<sup>30</sup> Jhopa is the cross of yak and cow or nak (female yak) and ox

<sup>31</sup> People of upper Mustang are also known as *Lobas*



The above numeric list of total livestock of Thini reveals that amongst six ethnic groups. Thakali households keep more livestock in comparison to other ethnic groups.

Households keep cow for milk and manure for the field. *Jhopa* has very important role in agriculture because it ploughs the fields, and it carries the loads (manure, fodder, grass, firewood). According to the informants, *jhopa* works harder and consumes less food than yak and horse<sup>32</sup>. The households consume sheep and chicken. They also sell sheep and chicken to earn some cash income. Those households who rear mules, earn good cash income. According to the informants, horses have less economic value<sup>33</sup> in regard of agricultural activities in the village.



**Photo 6.3** A ploughman is ploughing the field with a pair of Jhopas and the women walking behind the ploughman is dropping seed grains into the furrow

But those households who keep horse, gain merit as rich man in the society, so, it can be said that those households who keep horse, are some of the richest villagers of Thini.

Although villagers' main earning sources for their livelihood are agriculture and livestock rearing, many of them are not meeting all the requirement of their livelihoods.

They mostly lack cash income for various needs, which they fulfil by involving in various

local level income generating activities (section 6.4). There are some very essential areas where villagers must spend cash money. Following section describes the conditions of the need of the cash income for the villagers.

<sup>32</sup> There is a proverb relating to *Jhopa*, very famous in Thini, which is known as *Dhuppa Jheke Jhau, sihmpa shake tau* (in Tibetan) and *kam garne Jhopa, mitho khane ghoda* (in Nepali) or "a *jhopa* works more but eats less; in contrary, horse works less but consumes more and delicious."

<sup>33</sup> Another Nepali proverb regarding the unnecessary economic burden by keeping horses in the house, is also very famous in Thini, which goes like this: *rin nabhaye arkako jamani basnu, gharma khane manchhe nabhaye ghoda palnu* (in Nepali), which is translated in English as "If one is free from debt, act or stand as a someone's debt surety; if one does not have many family members to feed, keep the horses in the house." The proverb ironically connotes in Thakali society (in Nepali society too) that keeping the horse is like acting as surety on others' debt, which means inviting unnecessary tension.

### 6.3 The Need for Cash Income

29 years old, educated Thakali boy says,

*We rather like to give half kg of Karu or other kind of grains to a beggar instead of giving single Rupee. Money matters in our society when making a living. It plays very important role during the pursuit of livelihoods.*

In most cultivation, villagers use traditional manure and compost (*dhu*) for their agriculture fields but at present villagers also use chemical fertilizer (*bikase dhu*), especially during summer cultivation. Informants told me that especially during buckwheat and maize plantation season in the summer, many insects<sup>34</sup> appear and damage the crops. To minimize/avoid such insects from the fields they use pesticide. Some informants told me that after using modern pesticide they are succeed to save crops from the insects and they are also succeed to increase the productions of buckwheat and maize. Thus, villagers have to earn some money to buy modern fertilizer and pesticide.

At present, villagers have changed their food habit. In the past time villagers used to make food schedule as per their own agricultural productions. Now many villagers buy most of the things of their food. Even those households who produce the crops all round the year, try to sell their productions and buy other food from the South. They do not cultivate rice but nowadays they consume it as a main meal and consume it every day. Nepal Food Cooperation has been providing rice, lentil and salt in subsidized rate at Jomsom since 1970s but villagers like to buy them from Beni bazaar<sup>35</sup>, even with paying high transportation charge. They consider Government is not providing good quality food. Villagers also blame that the rice distributed with subsidy rate by government is unhealthy and unhygienic. In addition, villagers also buy sugar, cigarette, powder milk, ghee, salt etc from Beni bazar. Table 6.3 shows some of the most consumed goods by the villagers. It also shows the retail rates of the goods at Beni bazar, transportation charge and the rate at Thini village.

As I mentioned in previous chapters, Thini is predominantly a Thakali village (more than 72 per cent of inhabitants). They believe in Buddhism and they practice various religious as well as ceremonial festivals on daily, monthly and yearly basis. For these activities, they require a big amount of money. Box 6.1 indicates some of the major religious and ceremonial expenditures of the villagers.

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<sup>34</sup> The insects are locally known as *Khumle kira* in maize and *Phoujee kira* in buckwheat (and maize)

<sup>35</sup> Beni bazar is a headquarter of Magdi district of Western Nepal, which is also a nearest (2/3 days by foot) city in South from Jomsom. This city is also known as Beni in Nepal.

**Table 6. 3 Prices (in NRs.) of various food items at Beni and Thini**

No .	Food items	Rate at Beni bazar	Transpo rtation Rate	Total Price (in Thini)	Remarks
1	Rice (old price)	18/Kg.	12/Kg.	30/Kg.	Government sales rice in subsidy rate
1.1	Rice (new price)	23/Kg.	12/Kg.	35/Kg.	
1.3	Rice (government price)	26/Kg.	-	26/Kg.	
2	Lentil (old price)	55/Kg.	12/Kg.	67/Kg.	average price of lentil
2.1	Lentil ( new price)	50-60/Kg.	12/Kg.	62-72/Kg.	
3	Oil	105/Lt.	12/Lt.	117/Lt.	
4	Sugar	36/Kg.	12/Kg.	48/Kg.	
5	Powder Milk	260/Kg.	12/Kg.	272/Kg.	
6	Ghee	250/Kg.	12/Kg.	262/Kg.	
7	<i>Chiura</i> (parched or beaten rice)	26/Kg.	12/Kg.	38/Kg.	
8	<i>Maida</i> (flour: fine quality)	29/Kg.	12/Kg.	41/Kg.	
9	Salt	7/Kg	-	7/Kg.	villagers buy salt at Jomsom

Source: Field survey, 2007

Thakalis are aware of educating their children. They try to give as much quality education as possible to their children. Therefore, they also send their children outside Thini (mostly Pokhara and Kathmandu) for education. There is one primary school in Thini and one higher secondary school in Jomsom. Both schools are government funded. Moreover, there is one boarding school at Jomsom. Parents want to send their children in private school instead of sending their children in the public school (government funded). Even the poorer parents want to send their children to private school. Villagers believe that the education given by the private school is better than the public schools. According to the informants, it costs about Rs. 700-1000 for a child in a month if parents want to educate their children in the private school, whereas the education is almost free in the public schools. If parents want to educate their children outside Thini, it costs 5,000-10,000 a child per month. Therefore, villagers also need to generate cash income to educate their children.

Villagers have one primary health post in Thini and one local level hospital in Jomsom. But complicated diseases and emergency health problems cannot be cured in local level. The local health post and hospital also lack modern health equipments and medicines. Thus, villagers have to travel outside (mostly Pokhara and Kathmandu), which of course requires a good amount of cash money.

### ***Box 6. 1 Religious and Ceremonial Expenditures of the Villagers***

*Every household spends at least Rs. 5-10 each morning to light up Chheme (sacred light for Lord Buddha)*

*If a household calls for lama to read religious books in their house they have to pay Rs. 500 per lama per day with meal*

*A well-to-do family spends Rs. 30,000-50,000 for various religious activities in a year*

*The poorest family spends at least Rs. 2,000-5,000 for various religious activities in a year*

*Marriage ceremony, at present, needs Rs. 50,000-300,000 (depending upon households' economic position in the society)*

*A death or funeral ritual is more expensive than religious activities. Informants told me that it happens suddenly and they need to find cash immediately. In addition, during funeral practices, they need to feed all the villagers once every week from the 1<sup>st</sup> day of death until 49<sup>th</sup> days of the death of the family member. The cost may exceed from 15,000-50,000 and more.*

*Source: Field survey, 2007*

Villagers must generate the cash income for the *fund of rent*. For instance, they must pay tax for their agriculture fields to the government. However, the tax is very cheap. It costs Rs. 1.25 for each *ropani*<sup>36</sup> land. Poorer households borrow loan with ten per cent interest rate from the well-to-do family for the fulfilment of their need of cash, which they must pay back in time. Some temporary dwellers rent agriculture fields, which costs approximately from a few hundreds to Rs. 15,000 a year (depends of quality of land and numbers of cultivable fields rented). These dwellers must earn some cash to pay the rent of land. Some temporary dwellers also pay their rent of land in labour and in produce to the landowners. Such households must pay approximately 15-35 *pathi*<sup>37</sup> of *karu* and apple per year (Karu for *le* and apple for *bhar*).

Villagers also spend money on entertainment such as to buy radio, TV and DVD. About half of the villagers own one or all of them (for detail see appendix 1). A household having colour television with DVD player gets merit in the society (*fund of ceremonial*). Among total interviewed households, 52 per cent own a television, 10 per cent own a radio, 8 per cent own a TV and a Radio, 8 per cent own a TV and a DVD, 2 per cent own a TV, a DVD and a Radio. Only 20 per cent households do not own any of the above. The tradition of buying such things is increasing in the village. Thus, villagers need a good amount of money for such things.

<sup>36</sup> Land measuring 5476 square feet. Locally, total number of fields where 10 *pathis* of seed can be sowed (5-10 *le*), is considered as a *ropani* land

<sup>37</sup> A *pathi* is equivalent to 3.4-4.0 kg, depends on things, such as grain, flour or others

**Table 6. 4 Approximate Expenditures of a 4-6 Members' Household in a Month**

Utilities	Quantity (in a month)	Expenditures in NRs.
Rice	200-250 kg	7000-8750
Lentil	10-20 kg	670-1340
Salt	3-6 kg	21-42
Oil	4-8 liter	468-936
Matchbox	6-9 packs	6-9
Powder Milk	4-5 kg	1088-1360
Education (private)	month/per student	700-100
firewood	6-10 <i>bharis</i>	960-1600
Electricity	Per month (minimum charge)	70
Drinking water	Per year	350
Total	Per month	11333-15457

**Note: (a) Above expenditures do not include religious as well as ceremonial expenditures, and (b) the expenditures may not represent all the villagers.**

Source: Field survey, 2007

Some informants informed me that the economic position of a Thakali household could also be measured by the way of decoration of their kitchen. They like to decorate their kitchens with expensive utensils and various kinds of food ingredients, including various types of grains, in different types of boxes in the kitchen. They want to show their social position by showing physical material of their houses to other villagers and to the outsiders. Thus, such a tradition really needs a big amount of cash money for a household.

Many boys and girls wear modern Western dresses such as jeans pants and shirts, and sport wears. Women are interested in expensive jewellery. Thakali men drink *raksi*. Although almost all the Thakali households make *raksi* in their own home and sell it to others too but men visit others' house (*bhatti*) to drink *raksi*, which costs Rs. 10 for each glass. Some villagers have addiction for cigarette and chewing tobacco for which they spend from a few hundreds to a thousand Nepali rupees a month. For all these things, they must generate cash income and these are also becoming an unavoidable necessity of an acceptable 'genre de vie'.

In addition to above-mentioned expenditures, villagers also need cash income to pay the bills of electricity, telephone, television, drinking water.

**Table 6. 5 Details of the payment of the utilities**

No	Services	Rate in NRs	Durati on	Remarks
1	Drinking Water	350	Per year	Managing by the villagers themselves
2	Cable TV network	150	Per month	Currently, they are watching seven channels with the help of cable network.
3	Electricity	70	Per month	Rs. 70 (for up to 20 units of use) is the minimum charge in a month. But if one uses more than 20 units in a month then it will count with the rate of 4.45-4.55 <i>Paisa</i> (lowest unit of Nepali currency or NRs i.e. 100 <i>Paisa</i> = 1 Rupee) per unit for an additional unit used.
4	Telephone	200	Per month	Until now, Thini has three telephone lines (2 private and 1 public). Rs. 200 (for up to 100 local calls) is the minimum charge in a month. Additional calls cost Rs. 1.30 <i>Paisa</i> for each local call and 6-7 Rupees for each STD call.

Source: Field survey, 2007

The conditions and contexts for the need of the cash income have been explained in above section. Thus, following sections explain the ways to generate cash income by the villagers for these expenditures.

## **6.4 The Ways to Earn Cash Income**

### Income from agricultural production

Agricultural production is the major earning source for most of the households of Thini. The villagers sell some of the production to fulfil their cash requirements. Even the poorer households sell their little surplus production for the cash. If they consume buckwheat, they sell barley or vice versa. They sell almost all kinds of grain they produce but they hardly sell flour of barley because they consume it themselves.

Some people from the South and *raksi* sellers buy *karu* and yeast from Thini village. Since the tourism activities in Jomsom are growing fast, some hoteliers also buy *karu* and yeast to make *raksi* from the villagers. Horse and mule owners buy maize from other villagers. Villagers' frequent customers are villagers themselves, the armies of Nepal Government who camp in Kaisang (East from Thini), *Karmacharis*, labourers and a few tourists (domestic and international).

Villagers sell the agricultural productions not only to make cash income; but also to pay and barter. For instance, they barter *karu* for buckwheat, and grain for flour. In addition, they also use crop as a method of payment to the labourers instead of giving cash.

**Table 6. 6 Selling of Agricultural Productions**

Types of the crops	Unit	Local price in NRs.
Buckwheat or <i>Ghepe</i>	1 Pathi	100-110
Flour of Buckwheat	1 Pathi	170.00
<i>Karu</i>	1 Pathi	130-135
Flour of <i>Karu</i>	1 Pathi	150-200
Barley or <i>Cheka</i>	1 Pathi	65-70
Flour of Barley	1 Pathi	65-100 (rarely sell)
Yeast/ <i>Marcha</i> or <i>Bhrama</i> <sup>38</sup>	1 Pathi	160-170
Maize or <i>Makai</i>	1 Pathi	80-100
Beans or <i>Bhodi</i> <sup>39</sup>	1 Pathi	200-260
Patato or <i>Taya</i>	1 Pathi	35-75
Flour of green dried buckwheat's leaves or <i>Dhobhra</i> <sup>40</sup>	1 Pathi	160-200

Source: Field survey, 2007

Some households sell vegetables for cash income. They sell vegetables both inside and outside the village. Although most of the households produce vegetables in their own land for household use, some household must buy them from others. Since Jomsom is becoming attractive market for the villagers, some of them also sell their vegetables in Jomsom. The visitors from the South also buy garlic from the villagers.



**Photo 6. 4 Vegetable sellers in Jomsom**

**Table 6. 7 Prices of the Vegetables**

No.	Vegetable	Unit	price in NRs.
1	Green spinach or <i>Dho</i>	1 Kg.	15-25
2	Radish or <i>Lhapu</i>	1 Kg.	10-20
3	Cabbage or <i>Bandakovi</i>	1 Kg.	10-25
4	Cauliflower or <i>Kauli</i>	1 Kg.	30-50
5	Tomato or <i>Golbheda</i>	1 Kg.	20-50
6	Garlic or <i>Nho</i>	1 <i>Pathi</i>	80-115

Source: Field Survey, 2007

<sup>38</sup> It is a one of the most important ingredients to make *Raksi* of *Karu* in the village

<sup>39</sup> Among various kinds of *Bhodi* they cultivate yard-long-bean, butter bean and French beans

<sup>40</sup> *Dhobhra* use to cook as lentil or instead of lentil for lunch and dinner

### Income from mule and *Jhopa*

As stated earlier, livestock is an essential component of an agrarian family. Some households are making good cash income from mules and *Jhopas*. Since Mustang district still lacks access to the road, mules are the main means of transportation for various things. Mules carry construction materials, basic household needs such as rice, lentil, cloth, salt, sugar, oil, cigarette,



**Photo 6.5 Mules are carrying loads**

powder milk for the local people, selling materials for the hoteliers and guesthouse runners, such as various ingredients for cooking, whisky, beers, cooking gases, tourists' baggage and tours and trekking equipment for travel agencies in Mustang. A healthy mule can carry 50-60 kg at one time. It costs Rs. 12 per kg to carry by mule. However, if a travel agency wants to hire mules to carry the tourists baggage and trekking equipment it costs Rs. 500-800 per day. In Thini, a few households earn very good cash income by carrying the goods by the mules. In addition, some do mobile trade by carrying goods by mules. They sell the goods with some profit. If mule driver is owner him/herself, he/she can save a good amount of cash.



**Photo 6. 6 Jhopas are carrying loads of firewood from the forest**

*Jhopas* are another source of income for the villagers. *Jhopas* are used to carry the loads. But unlike mule, they are used for the short distance. They are mostly used for agricultural purposes, such as to carry the manure to the agriculture fields, to carry firewood, fodder, litter and humus from the forest. Some households also sell firewood carrying by the *Jhopas*. *Jhopa* owners also make good cash income by carrying manure and by

ploughing other villagers' agriculture fields. Such *Jhopa* owners earn about Rs. 100 a day.



### Cash Income from the *Bhatti* (Tavern)

As mentioned earlier, some households own *bhatti*. Although most of the Thakali households consider their kitchen itself as a *bhatti*, they do not mention explicitly as established for business purpose (*bhatti* running is also a tradition of Thakali ethnic group). They sell *raksi*, meat, vegetables, cigarette, matchbox and noodles. Primarily they sell *raksi*. Even the rich households sell *raksi* for cash income. At present, their major customers are the villagers themselves, the armies of Kaisang and the labourers. Presently, a bottle of 650 ml *raksi* of *karu* costs Rs. 40 and a jug of approximately 4.5 liters locally made beer from *karu*, known as *pa* in Thakali language (*chhyang* in Nepali language) costs Rs. 40.

In the past, many households used to migrate to the low land (South) to run a *bhatti* in the winter. Practicing such kind of seasonal activities had two purposes; first, to avoid the severe cold during the winter and second to make some cash by running the *bhatti*. However, at present such seasonal practice has almost stopped (although some goes to meet their relatives and some goes to help their family members who have already established some kind of businesses, such as hotel, guesthouse, tavern etc in the South). In addition, some households have also found other options for earning cash income, such as apple plantation, and working in various governmental and non-governmental organizations.

I requested all the interviewed households to mention about the monthly income from their *bhatti*. I did not get exact answer from 64 per cent of the households about the income from the *bhatti*. Some of them did not want to reply, some of them did not know how much they would earn, and some of them did not run *bhatti*. Those who stated their approximate income (36 per cent) from the *bhatti*, earn ranging from Rs. 1,000 to 5,000 in a month. Among these respondents, some of them are selling *raksi* in Jomsom in big quantity. Their earning extends from Rs. 30,000-60,000 per annum. They make *raksi* as per the requirement of the hoteliers and guesthouse runners of Jomsom.

### Income from selling firewood, fodder and wage labouring

There are some households in Thini whose main cash earning sources are wage labour and selling firewood, fodder. Following table shows the earnings of the villagers from selling firewood, fodder, grass, and from wage labour.

**Table 6. 8 Wage Labour, and Selling of Firewood and Fodder,**

Commodity	Unit	Local price in NRs
Dried firewood or <i>Sin</i> (of pine or <i>dhupi</i> )	1 Jhopa or 2 <i>bhari</i> <sup>41</sup> (approx. 50-60 Kg)	180-200 (according to the respondents firewood from pine makes less smoke during cooking and it is also healthier in comparison to other kind of firewood)
Dried firewood or <i>Sin</i> (of other trees)	1 Jhopa or 2 <i>bhari</i> (approx. 50-60 Kg)	150-170
Straw of <i>karu</i> or <i>Chhi</i> (in Thakali) or <i>Nal</i> (in Nepali)	1 Kg.	7-10
Fodder or <i>Chhi</i> of buckwheat	1 <i>bhari</i> (approx. 12-15 Kg.)	100-120
Green grass and fodder or <i>Dhuchhi</i>	1 Kg.	12-15
Labour income with breakfast, lunch and dinner	For a day	Male: 100
		Female: 80
Labour income without breakfast, lunch and dinner	For a day	Male: 200-250
		Female: 200-250

Source: Field survey, 2007

In addition to the earning strategies of some of the poorest households of Thini, they earn cash by driving the mules. Their earnings vary according to the number of days, distance and the total number of mules he/she should drive. Normally, such mule drivers get Rs. 2,500-6,000 as salary in a month. Moreover, they also get Rs. 300-500 per day as allowance for food during travelling.



**Photo 6. 7 Firewood sellers are carrying the *bharis***

#### Income from the Apple Plantation: A new way to make a cash income

Apple plantation is growing very fast in Thini. It is mainly because of ongoing road construction in Mustang. Nepal government is constructing road to link Mustang with national road network. Currently, 76 per cent households have apple fields.

In 76 per cent households, those who have planted apple, 44 per cent planted 5-10 years ago and 32 per cent have recently planted (less than 5 years ago). Likewise, among interviewed households, 24 per cent do not own *bhar*, 40 per cent own 1 *bhar*, 20 per cent own 2 *bhar*,

<sup>41</sup> *Bhari* = load, carries by the local people or animal (especially by *Jhopa*) on their back



**Photo 6. 8 Labourers are working on road construction in Mustang**

8 per cent own 3 *bhar* and 8 per cent have leased *bhar* for apple plantation.

Presently, most villagers sell apple locally at Rs. 12-15 per kilogram. Some households use it to make *raksi* and dehydrated apple<sup>42</sup>. Some households also sell apple carrying by mule to the South. But villagers say that because of long distance to Beni (about 4 days for

mule) apple loses its freshness and costumers do not like it. Very few

villagers sell apple transporting by plane as it costs Rs. 35 per kilogram as the transportation charge alone. Thus, in such situation, villagers hope that ongoing road construction may bring new market opportunity. They say that business of apple can be another major source for the cash income in the future.

According to the farmers who produce apple, earn Rs. 2,000-15,000 per annum by selling it. Villagers believe that once they plant apple in their fields they do not need to work hard all round the year like in other types of cultivation. After 5-6 years of plantation, they can get fruits from the trees.

#### Income from the migration

Although I do not have details about income from the migration, according to the informants, those villagers whose family members have migrated get some support (cash or things) from their migrated family members. Adult villagers are highly motivated to go abroad and to earn money.



**Photo 6.9 An abandoned *goth* (corral) of a migrated household**

After talking with some of the youths of Thini, I came to know that some active population (20-45 years old) go either abroad or to other regions of the country for the cash income. For instance, some of them migrate abroad like Japan and the USA. Some of them migrate in various cities like Pokhara and Kathmandu within the nation.

<sup>42</sup> They make slices of fresh apple, which they dehydrate in the sun. Per 500 grams dehydrated apple cost NRs 35-45 in Jomsom

Among total interviewed households, 72 per cent households' none of the family members have migrated. Remaining 28 per cent households' one or more than one family members have migrated, among them 20 per cent households get some kind of economic support (cash money, clothes for the family members, TV, radio, DVD player) from their migrated family members and 8 per cent family do not get any kind of support from their migrated family members.

Respondents mention that there is one doctor and one pilot who are originally from Thini village. Nowadays, both of them hardly visit Thini. Some of their family members still live in Thini. They send money as per the need of their family.

Some adult villagers (I met two of them) have joined Indian army. The family of these soldiers get very good amount of money (one informant mentioned that these army personnel earn about NRs. 20,000-35,000 a month).

#### Income from the miscellaneous activities

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the tourism activities are growing very fast in Jomsom. The region is located in one of the very famous trekking routes of Nepal, namely Annapurna circuit or trekking around the massive of Annapurna Mountains. Thousands of tourists visit annually (see figure 2.1). Though Thini is not getting much direct benefits from the development of tourism in the region, two villagers explicitly mentioned that they serve as porters for the tourists. Very few mule owners send their mules to carry tourists' baggage. Only one respondent mentions that her main source of income is tourism. The tourists hardly visit and stay in Thini. However, the development of the tourism has some indirect benefits to the villagers. For instance, the villagers can sell their surplus agricultural production in Jomsom. Some of them sell their vegetables. Likewise, some others sell *raksi* to the hoteliers and guesthouse runners, and still others sell apples.

#### ***Box 6. 2 One of my Key Informants has left the Village recently***

*One of my key informants has recently gone to the USA for a job. I got the message from one of his family members about this. I contacted him over the phone. During the conversation, he sounded very happy. He said he was earning very good amount of money though he had paid an extremely huge amount of money to go to the USA. Though he requested me not to disclose the total amount he paid, I can just say that the amount was in seven digits and he is earning in five digits per month.*

*Source; Field survey, 2007*

Some of the villagers also work as teachers and civil servants. There are two teachers working in the local school, *Mukti Namuna Lower Scondary School, Thini*. These teachers earn good cash income. Similarly, two villagers work in the district office at Jomsom. They also involve in agriculture and livestock rearing in the village. A few other villagers who work in government and non-government organizations live outside Thini.

Two *lamas*<sup>43</sup> generate income from working as shaman in the village. Though villagers mostly offer *raksi* for their works, some also give money (money may extend form few rupees to 50 rupees and sometime more than that), and sometimes villagers pay in kind, such as grains (villagers mostly offer less than a *mana*). Alternatively, villagers just thank and honour their works. Such *lamas* feel proud of their works (*fund of ceremonial*). Villagers respect their works because they believe that such *lamas* have some kind of supernatural power to protect their family and to cure some diseases.



**Photo 6.10 A shaman lama is purifying and protecting the woman's family members with his spiritual power. The woman is accepting his sayings by joining two hands together and she is also putting a photograph of her family members on her lap. A man sitting nearby the woman is her husband.**

## **6.5 What constitutes FUNDS for the villagers?**

As discussed in chapter five and earlier in the present chapter, we see that Thini villagers are not practicing livelihoods only to survive in a strict biological sense. They must also involve in and practice various social as well as cultural activities in the village, which are governed by the local tradition and institutions (chapter five). Therefore, this must also be considered as an essential component in the pursuit of their livelihoods.

The *fund of reproduction* of the villagers is being maintained and sustained through the agricultural activities and livestock rearing. Even though all the households of Thini own some

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<sup>43</sup> There are two types of Lama in Thini; one is for the Buddhist monastery and another one is to work as the shaman in the village. Basically, first types of lama do not get married, though there is no restriction according to the informants, and they do not have their own family, they do not work in the agriculture fields and they do not participate in any public works in the village. And second type of lamas is like ordinary villagers, they get married, they have their own family, they cultivate lands, and they must follow all the rules and regulations of *gaund samiti* (GS or village committee).

land and few livestock in their house, many households lack sufficient agricultural productions. Such villagers fulfil their needs by involving in various activities such as sale of *raksi*, *pa* (*chhyang*), vegetable, grass, fodder, firewood, wage labouring and mule driving. Even the rich households of the village need cash income in the pursuit of livelihoods, which they earn by selling agriculture production as well as involving in other activities as mentioned earlier. Some villagers also fulfil their *fund of reproduction* by working in various types of jobs, and some have migrated to earn the cash income. The degree and intensity of earning livelihoods varies between rich and poor villagers, but anyhow, all the villagers are able to sustain and maintain their *fund of reproduction*.

The *fund of rent* is less stressful for most of the villagers. They have to pay very little amount of tax per annum to the government, so, villagers do not count it as so important. However, those permanent and temporary dwellers who have leased cultivable lands must raise more *fund of rent*. In Thini, there are three types of land lease system: in cash, grain and labour (in kind or as a caretaker). First, a land leaser must pay in cash per *ropani* of land he or she has leased. Second, cultivators must pay from few *pathis* to 35 (or more) *pathi* of *karu* or apple. The tradition of paying by grain and by cash for leased agricultural field is also known as *kut* (a type of sharecropping). Third, a few dwellers who have been protecting the assets of out-migrated villagers do not pay anything (cash or grain), instead they labour in the out-migrated households' land and house to sustain and maintain their assets in Thini. Such dwellers do not bear any burden of the *fund of rent*.

But Wolf (1966) argues that the *fund of reproduction* and the *fund of rent* are not sufficient to sustain and maintain the livelihoods of a rural household. These aspects are fulfilled only if we consider as human practicing the livelihoods in a strict biological sense. Indeed, such households must also set aside time for several social as well as religious practices as a part of their family's survival. In other words, they also need to produce *surpluses* (Wolf, 1966).

The *fund of ceremonial* denotes the expenditures on various religious and social activities. In Box 6.1, it has been mentioned that how much cash a household needs to spend on such religious as well as ceremonial activities in a year. The expenditures of *fund of ceremonial* not only denote mere spending cash, it can also be paid by involving and taking part in various social activities. Thus, the *fund of ceremonial* of a household can also be calculated as per their involvement and participation in various social as well as religious activities in the village, which is entirely regulated by local embedded institutions (previous chapter). Aase (2007: 3, to be published) says;

*“Active participation in festivals and family celebrations claims that the household have at its disposal a surplus produce that can be applied for feeding guests, offering gifts, contributing to*

*communal meals, being properly dressed, and give donations to the local gomba (monastery). This is the Fund of ceremonial”.*

According to the rules and regulations of Thini village, all the households have pre-defined role in the village, which also shapes and establishes social position of an individual. All the households must be available during the religious performance (*uiimen* and *dharo*) in the village. All the head of the household must bear the responsibility of *chhowa*, *bahidar* and *thuimi* in their respective turns. A household must respect the rules and regulation while using CPRs (see previous chapter). Such roles do not have any economic value for a household; indeed, it gives some social value to an individual or a household. For instance, becoming a *thuimi* is more prestigious than becoming a *chhowa* in the village. A household must count all these responsibilities as an essential part of earning of their livelihoods. These all activities are the *fund of ceremonial* of the villagers.

## **6.6 Summary with some Discussions**

Although many villagers lack sufficient crop productions to feed their family members all round the year, they fulfil their insufficiencies of crops by rearing livestock in the village. Villagers mainly spend cash to buy various food items such as rice, lentil, oil, sugar, powder milk, noodles, biscuits, cigarette, and matchbox. Their expenditures also extend to educate their children, for various religious as well as social activities within the village and in other miscellaneous expenditures, such as to maintain the kitchen, to buy jewellery, modern dresses, *raksi*, cigarette and tobacco. Some villagers generate cash income by the sale of surplus grains, some sell vegetables, grass, fodder and firewood, and some earn cash income by doing wage labouring and mule driving. Some villagers own mules, which they use to carry villagers’ as well as hoteliers’ and guesthouse runners’ loads from which they earn good cash income. A few villagers also generate cash income by working in various kinds of jobs, such as teachers, governmental personal, and working as *lama*, however they also involve in agriculture and livestock rearing in the village. Though villagers’ used to migrate seasonally in the past, at present such activities are almost stopped. The youths and the active villagers from age 20 to 45 migrate inside and outside the nation for the cash income and the education.

Among the various income generating activities of the villagers, they rank agricultural activities, such as crops production, vegetable and apple production and their sales, and livestock rearing, such as *jhopa*, mule, cow and sheep and earnings from them as the main sources of income. They consider rest of the activities as additional and supportive for their livelihood. There are some villagers in Thini whose main cash earnings rely on selling of fodder, firewood, grass, mule driving and wage labouring. Only a few households of Thini enjoy the income from migration,

governmental jobs, which do not represent villagers' main sources of livelihood yet. Even though income from such activities is increasing and villagers are inclining towards them, villagers' reliance on agricultural and livestock rearing are higher than on other sources of earning livelihood. Thus, agriculture and livestock rearing are the main sources of income for the fulfilment of the various requirements of a family in Thini.

The *fund of reproduction* denotes the labour power of a family. If a household produces more crops or has sufficient crops to feed the family members, virtually shows its status in the society and it denotes that it has sufficient labour power for the survival of the whole family. If a household has labour power, it may even work in various fields or migrate to earn the money for the fulfilment of the *fund of reproduction* of the family.

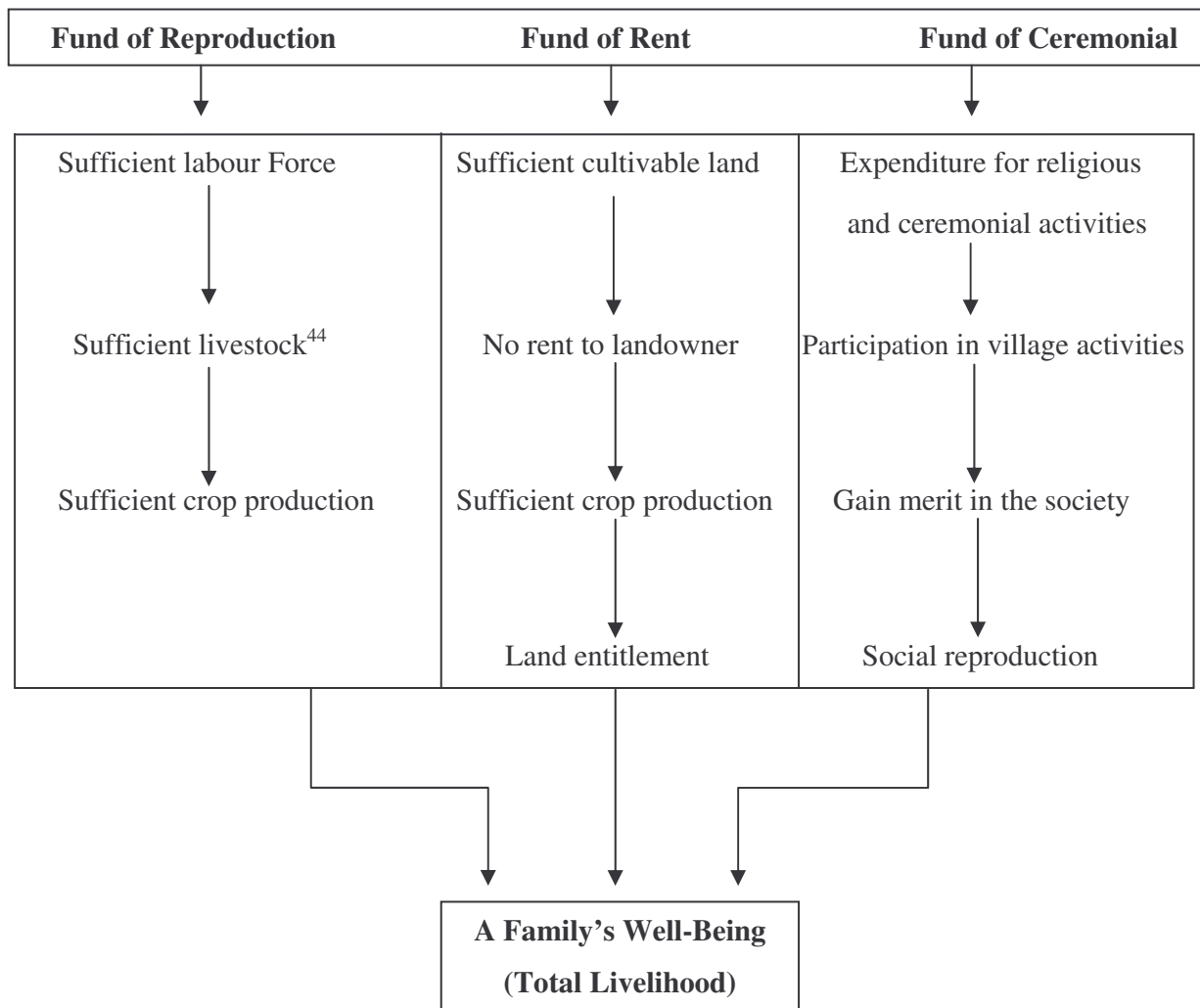
The *fund of rent* denotes the land entitlement of a household. If a household needs more rent to pay to the landowner, it represents that it does not own land or own very little land which is not sufficient to the survival of the whole family. Likewise, if a household has more land to cultivate it just needs to pay little tax to the government. According to the villagers, the tax of land is very cheap. Even the poor households do not take it as a burden. Thus, if a household owns more cultivable lands, virtually denotes its well-being in the society.

The *fund of ceremonial* denotes the social reproduction of a household. In other words, if a household has more grains to feed other villagers during festivals or in various ceremonial activities in the village or if it is able to invite more villagers in the house during such functions, it gains some social merits in the society. Likewise, it denotes that it is also able to spend money for all kinds of religious as well as social function in the village.

Thus, to sustain an acceptable way of life of a household in the Thini village, it requires all the *funds* as mentioned earlier. The *fund of reproduction* and the *fund of rent* may be universal, however, the *fund of ceremonial* varies from place to place. Based on the empirical findings of the present study, the following figure can be designed to represent a total livelihood of a household or a family's well-being in the Thini village.



**Figure 6. 3 The Totle Livelihood**



The next chapter shall analyze how major livelihood earning activities of the villagers relate and rely on common-pool resources (CPRs).

<sup>44</sup> In the case of the villages of the Trans-Himalaya region of Nepal in general and the Thini village in particular, rearing livestock is an essential subsistence strategy of an agrarian family. Thus, we can say that if a household has sufficient lands to cultivate it own sufficient livestock. It is because in the Trans-Himalayan region livestock are using various ways such as to fulfil the insufficiency of the agricultural production, to produce manure, to carry the loads, to earn the cash income, and to transport the people from one place to another. Thus it is the unavoidable component of a family for his or her family's well-being.

## 7. Livelihood and Common-Pool Resources

### 7.1 Introduction

From the analyses of the previous chapter, it can be said that most of the villagers' livelihoods earning sources directly or indirectly relate and rely on the agricultural productions and the livestock rearing. Some villagers also diversify their earning sources, such as income from migration, working in governmental and non-governmental offices, and small trade and business. A few villagers (mostly rich villagers) involve in such types of activities. Instead, most of the villagers' livelihoods still rely on agriculture and livestock rearing, which is not possible without using CPRs. Thus, the following sections analyze how villagers' main earning sources depend on CPRs.

### 7.2 Livelihood and Common-Pool Resources (CPRs)

CPRs are the basis for agriculture and livestock rearing, which are the basis for making a living of the villagers. They use wooden materials, soil and stones to construct the houses. Villagers collect all the construction materials of house from the CPRs. Fodder and grass for livestock, humus, litter and compost for agriculture, firewood as main source of fuel for households' use, entirely depend on the CPRs. They also use forest and its surrounding to graze their livestock, and common water for irrigation and drinking purpose.

For some households of the village, selling of firewood, fodder and grass is the main source of cash income. Villagers also use some special plants as a medicine, and some to construct the roof of their house, which of course rely on CPRs.

Likewise, CPRs are not only a source for making a living but also have the value for the tradition and culture for the villagers. The villagers respect forest as a goddess, because it provides sources for their livelihoods. Box 7.1 shows the value of wood in the village.

#### 7.2.1 CPRs and Agriculture

Almost all the interviewees of surveyed households have explicitly said that their agricultural activities absolutely rely on the availability of and the accessibility to the CPRs. The interviewees of *bhangdi* and *ghyanga* houses have more strongly said to me about their absolute reliance of CPRs for their livelihoods. Comparatively, rich households (those who own cemented houses) have more diversified earning strategies than the previous two groups. However, such households also depend on firewood as source of cooking fuel, fodder for their animal, and water for agricultural purpose, their degree of reliance on CPRs is lesser than on other income sources, such as trades and small business, remittance from migrants' family members, *raksi* selling to the hoteliers and guesthouse runner of Jomsom. In addition, due to lack of land or insufficient land to

support subsistence needs, many poor villagers depend more on natural resource use through access to the CPRs (Beck & Nesmith, 2001; cited in Ellis et al., 2004: 9). The following sections pinpoint the importance of CPRs for the agricultural activities;

#### Humus and litter for the agriculture

I observed people and *jhopas* carry dark earth made of organic material such as decayed leaves and plants from the forest to use as compost in their agriculture fields. The villagers have been using such compost to augment their agricultural production since the historic past, which of course relies on the availability of and accessibility to the CPRs. At present, many villagers use modern fertilizer for summer cultivation, but still the reliance of agriculture on compost and manure is still high. Some villagers say that the quality of compost for agriculture productions is greater than the modern fertilizer (though there are some villagers who say that modern fertilizers help them to produce more crops than by using compost). On the other hand, some villagers believe that the compost maintain the quality of soil, in contrary, modern fertiliser decrease the soil quality. The intensity of using compost and modern fertilizer varies from household to household. Indeed, all villagers use such compost from the forest during

#### **Box 7. 1 A Tale of Wood**

*During my previous visits to Mustang, I heard that those “households who keep more and more piles of firewood on the roof of their houses are considered as a rich man or a rich family and his or her family gain some merit (dhani pariwar or a rich family) in the society”. This time, during my fieldwork I decided to find the possible logics behind this tradition. I have taken some photographs of various kinds of roofs such as roof with many piles of firewood, roof with a pile of firewood and roof with no firewood. I have shown the photographs to the respondents and requested them to consider the myth. After analysing all the answers that I got during discussions with the respondents, I have concluded six positive and two negative meaning of the myth. Six possible positive logics of keeping piles of firewood on the roof are: symbol of richness, useful in hardship, useful in old age, useful in severe winter or when heavy snowfall occur, to decorate flat and plain roof, and to protect the house from rain because Thakalis’ have mud-stone roof that is water-soluble. If they do not keep firewood on the edge of roof water can enter inside from the sides of the house. And two negative logics are: if someone do not keep firewood, it denotes someone die in his/her family and second is the symbol of bad luck.*

*Whatever the logics they have behind the wood, it denotes social, economic and cultural relationship of villagers with the wood.*

*Source: Field survey, 2007*

cultivation.

At present, apple plantation is growing very fast (see sub-sections of 6.4) in the village. Although apple plantation fields (*bhar*) need less irrigation than crops production fields (*le*), it requires more manure and litter, which is not possible without using CPRs.

### Agriculture and Irrigation

The agriculture fields of Thini have been irrigated by locally institutionalized irrigations system (chapter five). Though all the agriculture fields are divided into two categories i.e. *le* and *bhar*, *le* needs more irrigation than *bhar*. The location of the village (Trans-Himalaya), its climatic fluctuations (semi-arid) and the quality of the soil do not permit villagers to produce crops as their requirements (see section 6.2.1). Even though they produce such a small quantity of crops, they need ample water to irrigate their fields during cultivation. That is why they have well-organized irrigation management committee which works under the guidelines of *gaun samiti* (GS or village committee). Since the plantation of apple trees is growing, it also needs some irrigation. Indeed, the quantity of the agricultural productions depends on the availability of and the accessibility to the common water.

### **7.2.2 CPRs and Livestock**

In Thini, livestock cannot survive without pastureland. The pastureland of Thini is located in the forested areas and its periphery. Villagers say that they have access to the forest to graze their livestock. Livestock also need fodder from the forest. In addition, before sowing and after harvesting the crops, villagers also graze their livestock in their fields, though villagers prefer to graze them in the pastureland.



**Photo 7. 1 Locally constructed water storage for the agriculture and the livestock and for the household purposes during scarcity of water**

Villagers need water not only for agricultural purposes, but also for feeding their livestock. Though at present many villagers use pipe water to feed animals, during busy working season, such as summer and winter cultivation period, they need to feed them either in the irrigation canal or in the locally constructed water storage (photo 7.1). Villagers also have constructed such water storage, which they use to store the water for the animal and for the village during hardship.

According to the previous chapter, the livestock rearing to some extent fulfil the insufficiency of agricultural production. Thus, being an important component of agrarian households' livelihood pursuits, livestock rearing also relies on the availability of and accessibility to the CPRs.

### **7.2.3 CPRs and Firewood**

Villagers consume firewood as a main source of fuel for their household. They use firewood for different purposes, such as a cooking energy, to keep their house warm, to protect their flat roof from the rainfall and wind, and to make big pile of firewood on their roof to gain social merit (see more on Box 7.1). Therefore, they need to use the CPRs extensively to maintain their various requirements.

A man of 71 years old highlighted the use and value of firewood in Thini village. He says;

*“I am now 71 years old. Since my childhood, I am seeing various uses of forest products in our village. If I am not able to collect wood during summer or other period of the year, I will have to spend a good amount of money to fulfil my requirements. I have been collecting it since my childhood. My parents also used to collect the firewood. A house needs at least 7-10 bharis (1bhari = 20-25 kg.) of firewood in a month. In addition, those households who make raksi need much more than that quantity. I need more than seven bharis in a month. Because of my old age, I need to use firewood to keep my house warm even in the summer time. Thus, there is only way to survive in Thini either I should collect the firewood from the forest or I must buy it from the sellers.”*

Even though electricity exists in the village and Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) is trying to create awareness about the alternative energy such as solar power in the village, as stated in the above statement villagers prefer to use firewood for their various requirements.

### **7.2.4 CPRs: Fodder and Firewood Sellers**

There are some households in the village, whose main source of the cash income is the sales of fodder, grass and firewood (these villagers also work as wage labourer in the village). These villagers also lease some agriculture fields in *kut*<sup>45</sup>. Moreover, they take care of the fields of the migrant villagers. Such villagers say, they must sell fodder, grass and firewood to fulfil the requirement of the cash. One adult female respondent says;

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<sup>45</sup> Leased agricultural fields where leaser pays either by money or by grains each year depending upon the number of fields he/she has leased. However, there is no such fix rules and regulation for *kut*. Sometime, leaser need to pay as *mana* or *pathi* grain sow in the agriculture fields or sometime they pay a few hundred rupees to a few thousands rupees to the owner.

*“Originally, I am from Dolpa district. We had own cultivable lands in Dolpa but it was difficult to produce enough crops in such a climatic condition, therefore, we migrated down hoping prosperous life. Presently, my husband is in Kathmandu to work. He earns very little money, which is not sufficient for our family (three children and parents), so, I must find some ways to generate income. Now, I have three fields in kut. I harvest the crops (mostly karu and buckwheat) that only sustain my family about 3-5 months, thus, for the rest of the year I earn by selling firewood, grass and fodder from the forest. During summer, my husband and I try to earn cash income as much as possible that will be used during severe winter season. During winter, it is very difficult to go to forest to collect the firewood and fodder. Instead, I work in the other villagers’ house, such as to clean the utensils and clothes, to clean the animal goth<sup>46</sup>, to work in their fields (if they need), to take care of small babies and sometime to help in the kitchen. Sometimes villagers pay me by grain, sometimes by money and sometimes by both. However, my main source of income is the sales of firewood, fodder and grass. The earning from those things I can use as I wish.”*

Not only temporary dwellers and labourers’ main source of cash income depend on the CPRs, some permanent dwellers of the village who believe that it is almost impossible to survive in Thini without using CPRs. An adult Thakali male respondent says;

*“I don’t know exactly since when we have been living here, but my parents told me that their parents were also born in Thini. I think we have been here since the emergence of Thini village itself (ha...ha...). I have four fields. Three are le and one is bhar. I have converted le into bhar two year ago. My neighbour says that we will earn very good cash income from the bhar in the near future. The productions of les support only 6/7 months to my entire family. Until now, I am not earning anything from bhar. I have two children, my wife and my mother to feed. Therefore, either I have to go outside the village to earn money or I have to find some alternatives here in the village. Thus, I sell firewood and fodder. I work as labourer. My wife also goes with me to collect firewood and fodder in the forest, and to work others’ agriculture fields. If there were no forest or wood we poor would die.”*

Likewise a male member of rich Thakali household, who sells firewood in big quantity to a troop of Nepal Army at Jomsom, says;

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<sup>46</sup> It refers to a shaded place to keep the cattle. Villagers keep their cattle inside the house or they design extra room attached with the main house to keep their cattle. In addition, villagers also construct corral outside their house (see photo 6.9).

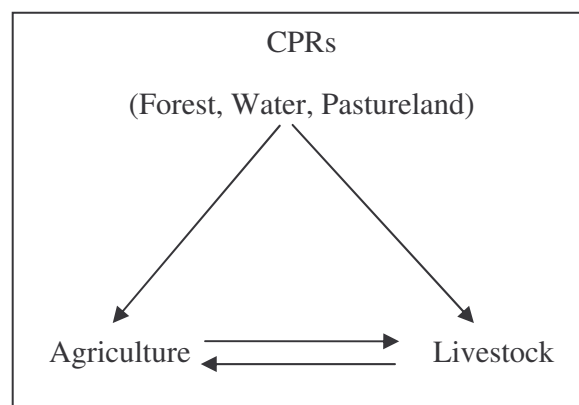
*“I am earning about Rs. 40,000 to 50,000 per annum from the sale of firewood alone. I use jhopas to carry the bharis from the forest and sell them to the Nepal Army, who camp at Jomsom. Through the sale of the firewood, I am able to send my children outside Thini for their education. I have one son and one daughter. Both are studying in Bachelor degree in Kathmandu. I must send minimum Rs. 15,000 per month for their accommodation and education. Thus, firewood selling is the main source of cash income of my entire family.”*

Thus, there are some households (rich and poor) whose main source of cash income is from the sale of firewood and fodder. In addition, since most villagers’ livelihoods depend on the income from agriculture and livestock; they need a large quantity of fodder for their livestock. Moreover, some villagers use tree leaves and vegetation to construct the roof of their house. Therefore, villagers must either buy these from the sellers or collect from the forest by themselves. None of these activities are possible without using CPRs. The box 7.1 and figure 7.1 present the importance and necessity of CPRs for their livelihood, and reliance of main earning sources of the villagers i.e. agriculture and livestock with the CPRs respectively.

### 7.3 CPRs and Livelihood

Since villagers believe the major earning sources of their livelihoods are agriculture productions and livestock rearing, they are implicitly heavily dependent upon CPRs. As discussed in the previous chapter, agriculture and livestock depend on each other. The following figure makes clear the reliance of villagers’ main sources of livelihoods on the CPRs.

**Figure 7.1 CPRs and Livelihoods**



Source: Field data, 2007 (the figure is based on impression of previous analysis of *Geheb and Binns, 1997; Sarch and Birkett, 2000; Allison and Mvula, 2002; cited in Ellis and Allison, 2004: 12*).

Note: The arrows denote the dependencies.

## **7.4 Summary**

In this chapter, I discussed the reliance of villagers' livelihood earnings with the availability of and the accessibility to the CPRs. Though previous chapter has also mentioned other sources of income of the villagers, most of the villagers' main sources of income are the agricultural production and the livestock rearing. Therefore, it can be said that it is impossible to produce crops in Thini in such climatic and geographic condition without using CPRs, such as forest, water and pastureland. Likewise, being an unavoidable component of livelihood pursuits of the villagers, and to support the agriculture activities, livestock also relies on the availability of and the accessibility to pastureland, fodder and water. Moreover, both activities also depend on each other (figure 7.1).

The next chapter shall analyze the villagers' perceptions regarding the existence of ACAP in their locality.



## **8. Local Perception about Annapurna Conservation Area Project**

### **8.1 Introduction**

Previous researches such as Stein & Edward (1999) concluded that contextual factors are important while analyzing the CPRs and the people's livelihood. They say, "*the definition, identification and evaluation of contextual factors will enable researchers to acknowledge the significance of societal contexts*" (Ibid: 217). The three previous chapters have analyzed the livelihood earning activities of the villagers in the context of the existence of two different social structures (Aase, 1998), i.e. *gaun samiti* (GS or village committee) and Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC), which contain different rules and regulations (chapter five) while managing CPRs in the same space-time-context (Ibid). In addition, another existing reality is that villagers' major earning sources for their livelihood rely on the available CPRs (chapter seven). It is also true that the protected areas are essentially a "*social space*" (Ghimire and Pimbert, 1997; cited in Mehta et al. p. 166), and as such they cannot be divorced from the *human context* (p. 167). First, thus, this chapter reviews the progress reports of Jomsom Unit Conservation Office (henceforth UCO or Jomsom UCO) of Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP), which are published by ACAP, particularly focusing on its conservation as well as developmental programmes in Thini village. Second, it analyzes the villagers' perception about the existence of ACAP in their region. Finally, it links up the livelihood activities of the villagers and the perceptions regarding the existence of Jomsom UCO/ACAP with the concept of local dialectic approach (Aase, 1998).

### **8.2 The Existence of ACAP in Jomsom**

During my stay in Thini and Jomsom, and two visits of ACAP head office in Phokhara, I reviewed progress reports of Jomsom UCO from 1993 to 2005, which was reported and published by ACAP. Though Jomsom UCO covers all the lower region of Mustang district, I have particularly focused on Thini village only. During reviewing the reports, my interest was in the activities carried out by Jomsom UCO/ACAP to uplift the livelihoods of the villagers. The following paragraphs describe in brief the activities of ACAP/Jomsom UCO in Thini village from July 1993 to July 2005.

Though the general activities of Jomsom UCO had started in 1992, it was inaugurated in the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 1993 with the objectives of managing natural resource conservation, tourism development, heritage conservation, alternative energy, community development, and conservation education in the region. During that year, UCO helped the villagers to construct drainage for irrigation in the village, provided skilled workers, and paid for the construction

materials (cement, stone, and rods) which they bought from Pokhara. *Gaun Samiti* (GS or village committee) provided the labour force during the period of construction.

During the period of July 1994 to July 1995 there was not much work done. UCO decided to form Conservation and Development Committee (CDC) in each VDC (Village Development Committee). They formed it in Jomsom VDC too. The main objective to form CDC in each VDC was- to make an effective local working body that could carry out both conservation and development works within the VDC.

None of development and conservation activities were done during the period of July 1995 to July 1996 particularly focusing on Thini and Thini villagers.

During July 1996 to July 1997 UCO gave training entitled 'committee management training' to CDC executive members. The objective of that training was 'to train committee members in proper accounting and committee administration procedures, and to develop capability in leadership and dispute resolving. During the same period, UCO with the help of CDC, organized 'Community Plantation' programme in Thini. The objective of that plantation programme was 'to cover the degraded land and to fulfil the demand of fuel-wood in the future'. Likewise, CDC/Jomsom UCO distributed some rubbish bin in the village with the objective 'to keep the area clean and to manage the garbage properly.

Some major works were done during the period from July 1997 to July 1998. That year, CDCs were dissolved, and ACAP formed another working committee at VDC level namely 'Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC)' instead. UCO gave committee management and conservation training for the new members of CAMC. UCO and CAMC helped the villagers to renovate drinking water reservoir of Thini. They also provided skilled workforce to construct the houses of the villagers. With this programme, 47 households benefitted. Under the Conservation Education and Development Programme, 13 students (9 boys and 4 girls of grade 6 and 7) of *Shree Mukti Namuna Lower Secondary School* of Thini were educated.

During the period of July 1998 to July 1999, UCO gave another training to the members of CAMC. They ran 'Adult Literacy Advance Class', and 'Income Generation Training' or 'Saving and Credit Training' for the villagers in which 24 villagers participated. The objectives of that training were to provide basic knowledge of saving and credit management, to encourage for regular saving, to minimize daily expenses of women, and to uplift the socio-economic condition of the area. They also ran 'Mother Group Management Training' for the villagers, in which 25 women participated. The objectives of this training were to exchange the ideas and experiences among the members regarding committee management, and to provide knowledge and skill in

leadership development, conducting meeting, maintaining records, bookkeeping, minute taking, and planning.

During the period from July 1999 to July 2000, some trees were planted in some bare land of Thini by CAMC. UCO/CAMC supported the students of the local school for ‘conservation education’.

Various kinds of works were done during the period from July 2000 to July 2001. Jomsom UCO helped the local school to provide conservation education to the students by providing necessary stationary materials and the salary for the teacher. They broadened the activities of conservation education, which included village sanitation campaign, manuring in plantation, awareness programme on conservation. Likewise, they also organized ‘mobile extension camp’ and ‘tourism awareness camp’ in Thini. Mobile extension camp focused on the value of local culture and tradition, and tourism awareness camp tried to make the villagers aware of the value of tourism business, and the proper management of tourism by using local resources. A hundred of villagers (66 adult and 34 children) benefitted by these programmes. Likewise, UCO conducted ‘fuel-wood Consumption Survey’ of the lower Mustang region. The following table shows the findings of the survey.

**Table 8. 1 Fuel-wood Consumption Survey, Jomsom UCO/ACAP**

VDC/CAMC	Consumption per day/person (in kg)	Population (2054) 1996/97	Total Consumption
Marpha	3.28	1128	3699.84
Jomsom ( <b>Thini</b> ) <sup>47</sup>	3.27	1322	4322.94
Kobang	2.35	914	2147.90
Tukuche	3.18	676	2149.68
Kunjo	2.79	691	1927.89
Lete	2.74	950	2603.00
Average consumption per person per day is 2.93 kg			

Source: Jomsom UCO/ACAP, Jomsom, 2007

During the same period, under the ‘sustainable community development programme’, CAMC/UCO with the active participation of the villagers, had improved some trails of Thini with stone (villagers supported 35.49% of total expenditure). Total 115 households benefitted by this programme. Some drinking water pipes were also distributed in the village. To produce the vegetables all round the year in Thini, CAMC/UCO constructed a Green House in

<sup>47</sup> Jomsom Village Development Committee (Jomsom VDC) contains three villages, (a) Thini (b) Jomsom, and (c) Dhumba (see map 2.1).

the village (at present, this green house is managed by kami and damai of Thini – so called lowest caste). Finally, during this period, they also lunched health awareness programme for the villagers. Particularly, they focused on the health problems caused by environmental pollution, and tried to provide knowledge on environment conservation and sustainable development through people's participation.



**Photo 8. 1 Green House of Thini Village**

During the period July 2001 to July 2002, education for women and conservation education for the schoolchildren continued. Furthermore, in the collaboration of ACAP, Jomsom UCO and CAMC provided the fencing materials (stone and soil) to the villagers to protect their agricultural fields.

Except giving conservation education training for the schoolteachers, CAMC/UCO carried none of special activities for Thini villagers during the period July 2002 to July 2003.

During the period July 2003 to July 2004, ACAP/Jomsom UCO provided Rs. 16, 500 to the local school to improve the condition of its furniture under the programme of 'school support programme'. They conducted a feasibility survey on alternative trekking route<sup>48</sup> in which they proposed Thini village as an important trekking route. UCO supported to establish an office of CAMC. UCO also supported CAMC for forest and alpine pasture patrolling. They also supported to form one 'tourism management sub-committee' in Thini village (though, I did not see any activities of this committee during my stay in Thini).

Importantly, during the period July 2004 to July 2005, ACAP/UCO supported the villagers to construct suspension bridge over the Kali Gandaki River to link Thini with Jomsom, which cost NRs. 1,256,649.01, amongst ACAP/UCO supported 428,059.10 and villagers spent 181, 685.00.

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<sup>48</sup> The government is constructing road on the traditional trekking route. Therefore, local people requested the local government to conduct a survey for alternative trekking route in the region, where ACAP invested money and conducted the survey.

According to the above descriptions, Jomsom UCO/CAMC is performing various kinds of activities for the improvement of the livelihood of the villagers. On the other hand, they have also started to manage villagers' CPRs by forming a new management committee, namely 'conservation area management committee. The CPRs, which were being managed by the villagers themselves conventionally, are now being managed by CAMC. Thus, there are different perceptions regarding the existence of ACAP in the village.

### 8.3 Villagers' perceptions about Jomsom UCO/ACAP

During the interviews with the respondents, I noticed positive as well as negative types of perceptions regarding the existence of ACAP in the region. Except one female respondent, all the respondents were very much aware of the existence of ACAP. Moreover, some of the respondents were found to have both negative and positive feeling about the existence of ACAP. Some villagers have only positive or only negative perceptions. The following table shows the respondents' perceptions about the existence of ACAP in their locality.

**Table 8. 2 Respondents' perception about ACAP**

Response	Number	Percent (%)
Positive	8	16
Negative	17	34
Both Positive & Negative	13	26
None of the above*	12	24
Total	50	100.00

Source: Field survey, 2007

\*includes 'no effect', 'no reply', and 'I don't know'

Following sections discuss the different perceptions of the villagers regarding the existence of ACAP by entitling them as positive and negative perception.

#### 8.3.1 Positive Perception

There are two major groups in the village in terms of the perceptions about the management committees of CPRs. The first group believe that the *gaun samiti* (village committee) itself should act as the management committee of CPRs instead of CAMC. These villagers have negative perceptions about ACAP. The second group, those who are the members of CAMC (four from Thini village among 15 executive committee members- including the chief- of the CAMC) and a few other villagers are satisfied with the works of CAMC and have positive perception regarding ACAP.

Many interviewees say that there are some positive changes in the village after the emergence of ACAP, such as improvement of trail condition, construction of drinking water reservoir, distribution of drinking water pipe, help to construct irrigation canal, economic support to construct fence for the agriculture fields, adult education, and conservation education for the children. Likewise, they are also very positive about various kinds of training, such as tourism management training, saving and credit training, and awareness about conservation and development and its role on the villagers' wellbeing. One adult Thakali man says;

*“Now we have drinking water pipe in our own house, the condition of the village's trails has improved and now we have cemented water reservoir. We have not expected all these before. If any villagers want to talk about the development of the village, he or she can directly talk with the CAMC member or he or she can also go to the office of Jomsom UCO at Jomsom. A lot of positive changes can be seen in the village after the existence of ACAP.”*

Since villagers' main sources of livelihoods, i.e. agriculture and livestock rearing, relate with and rely on the CPRs, I was very much curious to know their perceptions about the availability of and accessibility to the CPRs for their activities. For that, I have talked with all the interviewees. One Thakali male respondent says;

*“We can go to forest whenever we want, there is no restriction. We have easy access to collect firewood of dried and fallen trees. We can go to collect fodder whenever we want and we can graze our cattle in the forest whenever we want. But we must not cut the live trees. Then we must pay the fine to the ban samiti<sup>49</sup> (CAMC). If we need that, we must ask CAMC first. It is like in the gaun samiti (village committee), where we were completely forbidden cutting live trees. If we needed them, we had to consult thuiimi (headman of the village committee) first.”*

There were different negative perceptions regarding ACAP, but all the respondents explicitly say that they do not have restriction to access the CPRs. Even though many villagers do not like CAMC, they also agree that they can collect fodder, firewood (of dried and fallen trees), and to graze their cattle in the forest whenever they want.

As I have discussed earlier, the present leader of CAMC is from Thini village. I met him many times during my fieldwork. During our various talks, I have clearly mentioned him about most

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<sup>49</sup> Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC) is locally known as *ban samiti*. Here, *ban* means forest and *simiti* means committee

villagers' dissatisfactions because of changes in CPRs management. In one of our meeting, he said,

*“They have misunderstandings about CAMC. It is similar kinds of CPRs management committee, as traditional management committee; moreover, CAMC also works for the development of the village. For instance, we have just donated Rs. 100,000 to construct the bridge and to improve the condition of trail for the village. CAMC is formed to protect our natural resources in a sustainable way that is very essential for our lives. CAMC also follows and respects indigenous knowledge of CPRs management. CAMC is not against the villagers, it is for the improvement of the villagers' livelihoods.”*

A few villagers also have positive perceptions for ACAP works like birds and wildlife conservations. Such villagers say that because of ACAP, their natural resources as well as wild animals are being protected in a sustainable way, which finally attracts tourist in the future. Then, they believe that they will gain good income for their livelihood.

In comparison to the positive perceptions of the villagers regarding ACAP, there are some more points where villagers are not satisfied with ACAP.

### **8.3.2 Negative Perception**

Perhaps the developmental and the conservational programmes of ACAP for the villagers are the positive aspect; villagers have genuine points upon which they are not satisfied. Such as, they are not satisfied with ACAP/CAMC because of not distributing *poorji* in time, they believe that CAMC is not working as much as previously expected and they believe that ACAP works more on touristic areas. Villagers are also not satisfied with ACAP because they say that ACAP is doing very few infrastructural development programmes in the village and they do not have the programmes for the development of agriculture, livestock rearing, religion and cultures. Moreover, I observed the respondents' facial expressions during the interviews. While talking about the changes of CPRs management they looked little down and sad. Even they say many positive aspects of ACAP/CAMC in their village, they are quite positive towards conventional management. The following sections try to encompass such various kinds of views of the respondents.

I never forget one sad interview with an adult Thakali male. He was completely dissatisfied with CAMC. He needed some timbers from the forest for his completely damaged house. To get the timber, he must have a permission letter, i.e. a *poorji*. He has been trying to get that from

CAMC/ACAP for the last year. He did not get that yet. He had also shown me his damaged house (see photo 8.2). He further says,

*“I am trying to get a poorji since last year but I have not got it yet. I have visited the office of Jomsom UCO at Jomsom. I have also visited the office of ban simiti (CAMC). The chief of ban samiti is also from our village, I have also met him. But nobody is doing anything for me. Earlier, I just needed to request thuiimi (village headman). He could understand my problems very easily and I could also get timbers very fast. Now everything has changed.”*



**Photo 8. 2 A damaged house: Waiting for Poorji**

According to the ‘conservation area management act-2053 BS (1995/96), CAMC should distribute *poorji* from time to time (as per the requirement of the villagers). However, villagers say that they are not getting it since 5-8 years (villagers did not remember the exact years, some says five and some says six or seven or eight years). Fortunately, CAMC distributed *Poorji* in 6 May 2007 (when I was in fieldwork) in Jomsom VDC. CAMC distributed total 6930 cubic feet timber in Rs. 20 per cubic feet for the villagers of Jomsom VDC.

Though villagers’ livelihood relies on the availability of and accessibility to the CPRs, they do not want any obstacle and barrier while using CPRs. During the talks with the villagers, none of them have said that they do not have access to the forest for firewood (of dead and fallen trees), fodder and to graze their animal in the forested areas. I have also observed the activities like, villagers and *jhopas* were carrying fodder and firewood from the forest, and herdsmen were taking their livestock for grazing in the pastureland. Still, some villagers feel the loss of something, which belonged to them in the past. I met two such kinds of respondents, one (who owns 8 mules and carries others’ loads from the South or Beni bazaar) of them says,

*We have been using this forest since the existence of Thini village. Who gave the rights to them (ACAP/CAMC) to capture our forest? We are very much able to use our forest in a sustainable way. Our gaun samiti (village committee) is able to do that. We do not need any support.*

Another Thakali respondent says,



*When our village committee was managing the forest, we were very much alert about the deforestation and stealing of forest product from our forestland. We only used them as per the headman's suggestions and only in the needy time. Now, none of the villagers cares about it. Only the members of ban simiti (CAMC) think about that. We always try to collect forest products as much as possible. I am sure that the deforestation and the forest stealing are higher now than before (while village committee was managing the forest).*

Some villagers complain about ACAP, believing that Jomsom UCO of ACAP focuses on more development programmes in the touristic areas. One adult male Thakali respondent says,

*"They bias for the development works between on-route (trekking route along touristic villages) and off-route villages. I have seen that they have given them more training about tourism development. They have also taken them to visit to the South (low land) during training. If they develop our village as a touristic village, such as Tukuche, Marpha and Jomsom, we can earn some income for our livelihood. At present, you can see no tourism activities in our village."*

Some villagers are not satisfied with the activities of CAMC itself. They blamed CAMC as it is not working as they have previously expected. Among them, a 33 years old Thakali says,

*"I heard that CAMC is formed not only to protect forest; but also to develop the village as such. Did you see any development in the village (questioning me)? They collect the charges, taxes and other incomes of forest uses. They have big amount of money. I heard that they are investing it elsewhere instead of investing for the development of the village."*

A Kami, *ghyanga* (a poor class household) house owner says;

*There is no such an influential development programme for poor like us. You see ..., only rich people participate in various meetings and programmes of ACAP, and they get all the benefits. We poor are becoming poorer day-by-day.*

In the analyses of previous chapters, it has also been mentioned that villagers still strongly follow their traditions, beliefs and thoughts, which are essential for their livelihood pursuits. Such villagers say that ACAP is not focusing on the programmes to protect their cultural and religious heritages of the village. Though villagers say that there is no such negative impression on their culture and religion after the emergence of ACAP, they say that they are not getting support from ACAP to protect their historic and religious places.

Thus, at present context and time, both kinds of perceptions exist in the village.

#### **8.4 The Dialectic of Livelihood in the Thini Village**

This section of the present research measures the changes that have taken place during the pursuit of livelihood of the villagers. Aase (1998) offers a method to see the changes in a community or a society as a dialectical process. The process takes place interacting between social organization, social structure, and culture (meaning) over space and time (section 4.4).

The changes have been seen in the village, such as the recent development in the regions, the existence of ACAP in Jomsom, and the changes in CPRs management, which have brought some changes in the pursuit of villagers' livelihood.

Since the past time, villagers' have had their own institution with rules and regulations (social structure) to manage their day-to-day livelihood (social organization). The *gaun samiti* (GS or village committee), which is being legitimated by following its rules and regulation by the villagers, is the main social structure of the village. Besides GS, there are two other social structures, which are *daró* and *uiimen*. *Daró* and *uiimen* are being formed to sustain and maintain religion of the villagers. The institutions structure villagers' livelihood. This was discussed in chapter five.

At present, villagers have various earning sources for their livelihoods because of contextual changes at different times. There is no doubt that the agricultural activities and livestock rearing are the major livelihood activities of the villagers, but the development of Jomsom as tourist centre becomes the market centre to some villagers. These villagers' major cash income relies on the sales of *raksi* (locally made alcohol), vegetable and firewood. In addition, villagers are also benefiting directly or indirectly from the development of the tourism, and some have migrated for the money. This was analyzed in chapter six.

The emergence of ACAP in 1993 in Jomsom and the formation of CAMC to manage the CPRs may be seen as an *antithesis* for the traditional livelihood at that particular time. At present, however, living and sustaining livelihoods with these changes (let me say "realities") are becoming a regular behaviour or actions of the villagers. ACAP is also providing some facilities for the improvement of livelihoods (to some extent) of the villagers and has thus become a *thesis* for present livelihood.

On the other hand, villagers have also their own rules and regulation to manage the CPRs, which they have been practicing since the historic past. Thus, for the moment, the existence of ACAP (or CAMC) becomes *synthesis* for some people and *antithesis* for some people, because the

context and time has changed now. Therefore, at present, the two social structures are *thesis* for someone and *antithesis* for someone. Such conflicting perceptions regarding the existence of ACAP and the formation of CAMC were analyzed in the first section of this chapter.

The social structure, which structures social organization, i.e. behavior, is becoming more flexible day-by-day. For instance, according to the rules of GS, all the villagers must work as responsible members of GS, such as *thuimi*, *bahidar* and *chhowa*. If anyone disobeys the rules, they must pay the penalty, and the villagers also exclude him or her from various social and religious activities of the village. But, at present, such persons can sell the responsibility (in the case of *chhowa*) to other villagers. Thus, in case of need, they change social structure, which automatically change social organization.

Furthermore, they modify the rules as per their need. They can also change their behavior or activities as per the need in different contexts. However, as Aase believes, the meaning and the value (culture) of embedded institution among the Thini villagers has remained same even in the changes of social organization (behaviour or livelihood earning activities of the villagers) and social structure (changes in the CPRs management, i.e. from *Gaun Samiti* to CAMC system). For instance, role, status, and the meaning of *thuimi*, *bahidar*, *chhowas*, *lamas*, and the villagers in the village are same even in the changed context of social structure and social organization.

## **8.5 Summary with some Discussions**

This chapter is designed to explore the various perceptions of the villagers regarding the existence of ACAP (Jomsom UCO/CAMC). It is found that there were some important works done by ACAP after the establishment of Jomsom UCO in Jomsom in 1993. Later, during the interviews, I found that some villagers were not satisfied with ACAP. Both positive and negative types of perceptions were found, many villagers were not fully satisfied with the work of CAMC. In addition, still, most villagers liked to follow their traditional CPRs management, i.e. *gaun samiti* or *village committee*.

The livelihood of the villagers has gone through different context at different times. Before 1993 or before the establishment of Jomsom UCO/ACAP and formation of CAMC, the CPRs were managed by the *gaun samiti*, the management committee has changed after emergence of ACAP in the region. This event made many villagers unhappy and they started to perceive the emergence of ACAP negatively considering that as they lost their rights over CPRs, which I termed as an *antithesis*. Then, Jomsom UCO/ACAP has begun to help to improve the livelihood conditions of the villagers. They provided skilled workers to construct fence in villagers' agricultural fields, they gave some training to educate and to aware the villagers. They helped villagers to improve the conditions of the trails of the village. They also helped villagers to

construct water reservoir and irrigation cannel. Finally, these all activities of the CAMC/Jomsom UCO/ACAP helped the villagers to understand and perceive the activities of ACAP positively while making their living. This I termed as *thesis*.

At present, the existence of Jomsom UCO/ACAP is the *thesis* as well as *antithesis* for the villagers because both groups exist in the village. To avoid such conflicting situations, Jomsom UCO/ACAP tries to find a *synthesis* via Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC), in which both, ACAP personnel and villagers work together for the development of the village and the improvement of the villagers' livelihood.

## 9. Conclusion

### 9.1 Conclusion

This research is conducted in order to know the livelihood situations of the people of Thini village of Mustang district. The main research objective of the study is to know *how villagers sustain their livelihood in a situation of formally regulated Common-Pool Resources (CPRs)*. Interview and observation were the major data collection techniques, photographs, village records (*kuriya*) and the information from the secondary sources have also been used.

A livelihood of a person comprises the fulfilment of not only the biological needs of the human being, but also the social as well as cultural needs and responsibilities in the society he or she lives. Thus, three factors shape and reshape an individual's or a family's livelihood, i.e. (a) local institutions, (b) sources of earning livelihood, and (c) the context. The embedded or local institutions of a particular society constrain and facilitate for the fulfilments of such requirements. Since the study area of the present study is located in the Trans-Himalaya region of Nepal, the potentiality and availability of the Common-Pool Resources (CPRs) such as forest, water and pastureland, and accessibility to them also determine the livelihood of a family. Likewise, the context (existence of Annapurna Conservation Area Project, or ACAP) also helps and hinders the local people while earning the livelihood. Thus, in regards to the objectives of this study, first, it concludes the entire thesis as per the research questions set in the first chapter. Second, it revisits the theories and concepts applied in the analyses. The last section indicates the future trend.

#### 9.1.1 What are the major earning sources of the villagers?

Agriculture and livestock rearing are the main sources of earning for the livelihood of the villagers. Though many villagers lack sufficient crops production, they fulfil their insufficiency by rearing livestock, by running *bhattis* (tavern), by selling *raksi* (locally made alcohol), vegetable, apple and dehydrated apple, fodder, grass, and firewood. Some villagers are working as mule driver and wage labourer, which are their main sources of cash income. Some mule and *jhopa* (cross of yak and cow or ox and *nak* – a female yak) owners are making good cash income by carrying the loads. In comparison to the *jhopa* owners, mule owners earn a better income.

Even though the region is very famous for tourism, the villagers are not getting much direct benefit from it. Very few villagers are generating income from the tourism. Very few mule owners send their mule to carry the tourists' baggage. However, increasing tourism activities in Jomsom have made possible for the villagers to sell their surplus productions. For instance, they can sell their surplus agricultural production. Some of them sell their vegetables. Likewise, some

others sell *raksi* (locally made alcohol) to the hoteliers and guesthouse runners, and still others sell apples.

A few households are earning money from migration. Young villagers of age 20-45 wish to migrate outside from the village either to earn money or to find a good place for the education. Likewise, a few villagers also work as teachers in the village and as civil servant in the district office at Jomsom. However, all these villagers also involve in agriculture and livestock rearing.

The expenditure of the villagers is increasing day-by-day. In the past time villagers used to make diet as per their own agricultural productions. At present, most villagers buy their regular food items, such as rice, lentil, oil, salt, sugar, ghee, and powder milk. Villagers also spend money for the fulfilment of various social as well as religious ceremonies within the village (see Box 6.1). Villagers' expenditure also extend to maintain their kitchen, to buy TV, DVD, radio, jewellers for the women, modern and sport wear for the youths. Households also spend money to pay the bills of electricity, water and cable network. Many villagers drink *raksi* (locally made alcohol), smoke cigarette and chewing tobacco, which seem little expenditures but it cross sometime more than a thousand rupees (1 USD = 64-65 rupees during fieldwork) each month.

Most Thakalis - the permanent dwellers of Thini – are in a better position to make a living in comparison to the other ethnics of the village. Among Thakalis, cemented house owners – villagers categorized them as rich households - have sufficient earnings from agriculture, livestock rearing and migration (only a few households are generating income from migration) for their livelihood. *Bhangdi* (house constructed with wood, stone and soil), *ghyanga* (house constructed with wood and soil) house owners, which villagers categorized middle and lower income class respectively of the village, and in-migrated households lack sufficient agricultural productions and the cash income.

Although various kinds of income generating options have been seen in the village, income from agriculture and livestock rearing are of utmost importance for the entire villagers. That is why they consider other activities as additional or supportive for their livelihood.

### ***9.1.2 How do villagers' major earning sources relate and rely on the CPRs?***

CPRs, such as forest, water and pastureland are rooted in all the activities of the villagers while making a living. They construct the house with wood, stone and soil. They collect fodder for their livestock, firewood for household use, litter, humus and compost for the agriculture. They need pastureland for grazing their livestock, they need irrigation for agriculture and other purposes, such as to feed animal. Some villagers collect tree leaves to construct the roof of their house.

There are no other options than depending upon the CPRs for agriculture and livestock. Moreover, agriculture and livestock depend upon each other, which are supplementary for each other too (see figure 7.1). Thus, it is found that Thini villagers' major sources of earning livelihood i.e. agricultural activities and livestock rearing are not possible without availability of and accessibility to the CPRs.

### ***9.1.3 How do villagers perceive the existence of Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) and its regulation of the CPRs?***

Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) established Jomsom Unit Conservation Office (Jomsom UCO) in Jomsom in 1993. During 1997/98 ACAP and Jomsom UCO formed a village level committee to manage the CPRs and to improve the livelihood of the local people, which is known as Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC) in each Village Development Committees (VDCs). Then, CAMC is presently managing the CPRs (especially forest and pastureland, in case of Thini village, water is being managed by villagers themselves), which were previously managed by the villagers themselves. This change divides the villagers clearly in two different groups. First, the members of the CAMC (four from four different wards of the Thini village) and some supporters of them consider that the modern management i.e. CAMC is better than the conventional management i.e. *gaun samiti* (GS or village committee). Second group, considers that the conventional management was far better than the modern management.

Those villagers having positive perceptions and support the activities of CAMC say that ACAP helps them to improve the trail condition of the village, construction of drinking water reservoir, distribution of drinking water pipe, help to construct irrigation canal, economic support to construct fence for the agriculture fields, adult education, and conservation education for the children. Likewise, they are also positive about various kinds of training, such as tourism management training, saving and credit training, and awareness about conservation and development and its role on the villagers' wellbeing. These villagers believe that these changes and developments are helping them to improve their livelihood.

Even though modern management lets villagers use the forest freely for fodder, firewood, and to graze their livestock, villagers' are not satisfied mainly with ACAP/CAMC because it does not distribute *poorji* (a permission letter to cut the timber from the forest) in time. They also believe that CAMC is not working as previously expected and they believe that ACAP works more on touristic areas. Villagers are also not satisfied with ACAP because they say that ACAP is doing very few infrastructural development programmes in the village and they do not have the

programmes for the development of agriculture, livestock rearing, religion and cultures, which are the major sources of the livelihood of the villagers.

## 9.2 Theory Revisit

Wolf's concept to measure the economy of a household is found suitable for analyzing the livelihood activities of the Thini villagers. Villagers need to produce *fund of reproduction* to survive biologically in the village. But, this is not sufficient for them, they also need to have enough land (land endowment) to produce the sufficient crops, and must spend some time and money for the society too to gain social merit and to establish social status in their society, which Wolf's terms as *fund of rent* and *fund of ceremonial* respectively. If an individual or a family lacks sufficient land to cultivate, he or she needs to hire or rent it with the landowner, which obviously requires extra expenditures and such family may be counted as lower economic class in the society. Thus, these *funds* are the main requirements of the villagers while making a living in the village (figure 6.3). As the agriculture and livestock rearing are the main sources of income for the fulfilment of the various requirements of *fund of reproduction*, *fund of rent* and *fund of ceremonial* of the villagers, which are not possible without relying on the CPRs (figure 7.1).

Villagers' have their own institutions to manage day-to-day livelihood in the society, which make it mandatory to follow their traditions. The existence of institutions in the village is unseen, unspoken and unwritten for the outsiders, but the rules and regulations of that institutions are being applied in the real sense in the village. In addition, villagers strongly believe in that too. On the other hand, villagers are making and remaking the rules and regulations as per their needs. For instance, in the past time, *bahidar* (secretary of village committee) had to work free of cost as a mandatory social work. At present, they changed the rules and now he receives Rs. 1,500 a year as an incentive (see chapter five).

In this context, Aase's (1998) method to see the changes in the society, i.e. *local dialectic approach* is found suitable. He says that social changes must be seen in a dialectic interaction between what people do (practice), social norms and rules (social structure), and how people conceptualize and categorize them (meaning) in the society in space-time context. Moreover, *social organization* (practice, behaviour) and *social structure* (norms, rules) may change with space-time context, however *culture* (meaning) of certain phenomenon or activities can exist even if social structure and practice are changed with similar space-time context. In Thini village, social organization (village committee and CAMC) and social structure (behaviour and livelihood earning activities of the villagers) changed/have been changing, however meaning of their activities (e.g. meaning of *thuimi*, *bahidar*, *chhowa*, and *lama* or the value of *gaun samiti* in the



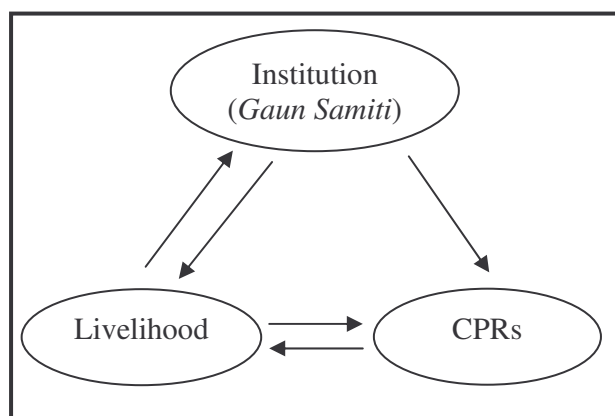
village) remain unchanged even in the present context. While analyzing the local institutions, it is found that the rules and regulations of *Gaun Samiti* (GS or village committee), *Dharo* and *Uiimen* (traditional male and female groups of the village) assign fixed social responsibility for the villagers, which they still follow and agree upon them.

While Hardin’s (1968) suggestion to manage the CPRs sustainably for the livelihood of the local people it should either be privatized or controlled by the state is opposed by the present study. Rather it is found that CPRs should be managed locally with the direct involvement of the local users i.e. Thini villagers. Even in the present context where local CPRs are managed by the combination of villagers (including other villagers of Jomsom VDC) and project personnel i.e. CAMC members, create confrontation between them, if it were managed by the state it might create more conflicts on the CPRs.

### 9.3 Future Trend: Livelihood, Institution and CPRs

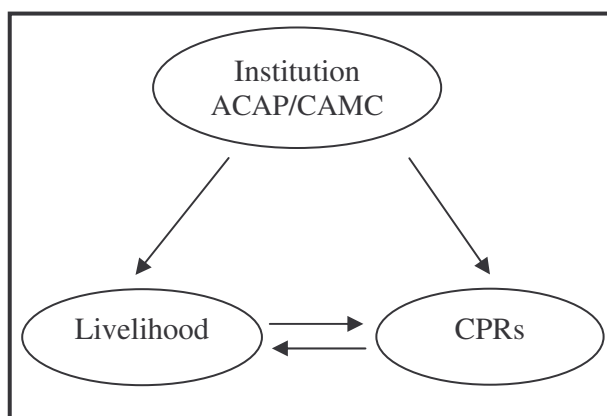
Figure 9.1 shows the villagers’ traditional livelihood activities in the case of their reliance on the CPRs for their various livelihood requirements and the CPRs were also being managed by themselves. Whereas figure 9.2 shows the modern livelihood (after the emergence of ACAP in Jomsom) of the villagers in the case of their reliance on the CPRs for their various livelihood requirements considering that if the management of the CPRs continues by CAMC/ACAP.

**Figure 9. 2 Traditional Livelihood**



Source: Field data, 2007

**Figure 9. 1 Modern Livelihood**



Source: Field data, 2007

Note: Double arrows denote the dependency and single arrow denotes the effect or impact.

Figure 9.1 shows the interrelationships between livelihood, institution and CPRs in the context of the Thini village and its people while making their living. The institutions, which exist in the village, have rules and regulations to regulate CPRs among the dwellers. Likewise, the institutions also have rules and regulations to manage the day-to-day livelihood of the villagers, for instance by providing fixed social and religious responsibilities to the villagers. In addition,

the rules of the institutions have also been changed as per the villagers' needs in the changing space-time context. I mean the day-to-day livelihood of the villagers also influence and enforce to make and remake the rules of the institutions. Thus, the institutions enable and constrain the livelihood of the villagers and the livelihood and the day-to-day activities of the villagers maintain and sustain the institutions. Whereas their livelihood, which relies and relates on the availability of and the accessibility to the CPRs, are also maintained and sustained through the institutions and day-to-day activities of the villagers.

Moreover, figure 9.2 shows villagers' major livelihood earning sources still rely on the availability of and accessibility to the CPRs, however the CPRs are being managed by CAMC which is formed by ACAP. CAMC/ACAP has its own rules and regulations to manage the CPRs. This is not solely formed to uplift the livelihood condition of the villagers, it is also formed to protect and conserve the CPRs. In the name of conservation, if CAMC imposes strict conservationist approach in the future it will indeed create big conflict between villagers and CAMC/ACAP. This may result in illegal encroachment and harvesting of CPRs by the villagers for their livelihood because the degree of reliance on CPRs for their livelihood activities will be seen continuing even in the future. During the fieldwork, it is also found that at present villages pay less attention in order to conserve and protect the CPRs (see section 8.3.2) because they considered that CAMC should be more responsible if it wants to manage and conserve the CPRs. Thus, it is possible that if CAMC/ACAP is unable to incorporate villagers and their institutions with their development-cum-conservation activities there will be more negative impact of it on the villagers' day-to-day livelihood activities in the future.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended that Conservation Area Management Committee (CAMC) be designed to incorporate local system and indigenous knowledge to manage local CPRs and livelihoods with the direct involvement of the villagers with their development and conservation programmes. Since the livelihood activities of the villagers rely on availability of and accessibility to the CPRs, CAMC should be designed to form separate CPRs users' group in each ward instead of one CAMC in each Village Development Committee (VDC), which contains 9 wards. In such separately designed users' group, the traditional CPRs management system should be included. Lastly, if a village contains more than 1 ward, for instance Thini village contains 4 wards, it should be designed as per villagers wish.

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## Appendix I: Households' Infrastructures in Thini

### Ward No. 1

SN	Head of Household	Infrastructures				
		HH status	Electricity	Television	Drinking Water	Toilet
1	Thulokanchha B. K.	P	E	-	-	-
2	Kaila B. K.	P	E	-	-	-
3	Manilal (thulo) Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
4	Manilal (sano) Thakali	P	E	-	-	-
5	Birendar Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
6	Tika Prasad Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
7	Paima Tenjing Thakali	PL	E	-	DW	T
8	Hira Bahadur Thakali	T	E	-	DW	T
9	Dhan Bahadur Thakali	P	E	-	-	T
10	Chhe Dorje Thakali	PL	E	-	DW	T
11	Nhoru Wangju Gurung	P	E	-	-	-
12	Aash Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
13	Purna Bahadur Pariyar	P	E	-	-	-
14	Karna Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
15	Man Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
16	Narayan Prasad Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	-
17	Wangju Sherpa	T	E	-	DW	T
18	Arjun Thakali	P	E	-	DW	T
19	Sammar Pariyar	P	E	TV	-	-

**Note:** E = Electricity, TV= Television, DW= Drinking Water, T =Toilet, HH Status =Household Status, P = permanent, T = Temporary, PL = permanent Lama

### Ward No. 2

SN	Head of Household	Infrastructures				
		HH status	Electricity	Television	Drinking Water	Toilet
20	Suk Bahadur B. K.	P	E	-	-	-
21	Budhhi Bal Thakali	P	E	TV	-	T
22	Santosh Thakali	T	E	TV	-	T
23	Madan Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
24	Sarki Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
25	Urkin Ghelchhen Thakali	PL	E	TV	-	T
26	Om Bahadur Thakali	P	E	-	-	-
27	Om Prasad Pariyar	T	E	-	-	-
28	Hyungkari Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
29	Chelee Thakali	P	E	-	-	T
30	Syang Phuru Thakali	P	-	-	-	-
31	Prem Lal Thakali	P	E	-	-	-
32	Sanjaya Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
33	Nani Thakali	P	-	-	-	-

34	Sailee Thakali	P	E	TV	-	T
35	Dil Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	-	-
36	Aaite B.K. (Female)	T	E	-	DW	T
37	Aaite B.K. (Male)	T	E	-	-	-
38	Deepak Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
39	Mhalam Thakali	P	E	-	DW	T
40	Prem Lal Thakali (sano)	P	E	TV	DW	T
41	Kul Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
42	Karna Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
43	Dil Maya Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
44	Bel Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
45	Tul Prasad Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
46	Hira Bahadur Magar	T	E	-	DW	T
47	Ghailung Thakali	PL	E	-	-	-

**Ward No. 3**

SN	Head of Household	Infrastructures				
		HH status	Electricity	Television	Drinking Water	Toilet
48	Lale Thakali	P	-	-	-	-
49	Jite B. K.	P	E	TV	-	-
50	Paldisi Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
51	Bal Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
52	Jagat Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
53	Ghyan Bahadur Thakali	P	E	-	DW	T
54	Indra Bahadur Thakali	PL	E	TV	DW	T
55	Dile Thakali	P	E	-	DW	T
56	Ratna Prasad Thakali	P	E	TV	-	T
57	Kul Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	-	T
58	Kal Bahadur Thakali	PL	E	TV	DW	T
59	Krishna Thakali	P	E	TV	-	-
60	Gaja Bahadur Thakali	P	E	-	-	-
61	Rikya Gurung	T	E	-	DW	T
62	Lal Prasad Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
63	Tirtha B.K.	T	E	-	-	-
64	Gore Thapa Magar	T	E	-	DW	T
65	Sita Gurung	P	E	TV	DW	T
66	Nhulham Thakali	P	E	-	-	-

**Ward No. 4**

SN	Head of Household	Infrastructures				
		HH status	Electricity	Television	Drinking Water	Toilet
67	Lakshit Thakali	P	E	TV	-	-
68	Kalu Thakali	P	E	-	-	-
69	Dev Lal Thakali	PL	E	TV	-	-

70	Purna Bahadur Thakali	P	E	TV	-	T
71	Aaita Lal Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
72	Mangal Thakali	P	E	TV	-	T
73	Kalu Thakali	P	-	-	-	-
74	Dhuntut Gurung	T	E	-	-	T
75	Kanchha Tamang	T	E	-	-	-
76	Suku Thakali	PL	E	-	-	-
77	Norbu Gurung	P	E	-	-	-
78	Chandra Bahadur Thakali	P	E	-	DW	T
79	Sana Prasad Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
80	Mana Bahadur Thakali (sano)	P	E	TV	DW	T
81	Temba Gurung	P	E	-	-	T
82	Sabi Thakali	P	E	TV	-	-
83	Mangal Mahat	T	E	-	-	-
84	Chelee B.K.	T	E	-	-	-
85	Thyukee Gurung	T	E	-	-	-
86	Bishwo Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
87	Kusum Thakali	P	E	-	DW	-
88	Aaita Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
89	Rajendra Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
90	Mhan Tchiring Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
91	Shree Prasad Thakali	P	E	TV	DW	T
92	Purna Bahadur Thakali (thulo)	P	E	TV	DW	T
93	Chhin Dorje Gurung	P	E	TV	DW	T
94	Sano Kanchho B.K.	P	E	-	-	-
95	Manju B. K.	T	-	-	-	-
96	Samsar Lama	T	-	-	-	-
97	Rajan Thakali	P	E	-	DW	T

**Name of the *Karmachari***

S. N	Head of the Household ( <i>Karmacharis</i> or Government personals)	All the <i>Karmacharis</i> live in rent, and have access to the electricity, drinking water, and toilet. Among them, Mr. Narayan and Mrs. Rama Devi (husband and wife) have been living in Thini since more than 10 years.
1	Narayan Prasad Poudel	
2	Rama Devi Bastakoti (Poudel)	
3	Ghyan Mani Poudel	
4	Shashi Sharma Poudel	

## Appendix II: Interview Schedule

### Household Survey, Thini, Mustang, Nepal, 2007

*NB: All Questions were asked in Nepali. In addition, the information collected from the fieldwork is solely used for academic purposes. All the private information of the respondents will be kept anonymous and confidential.*

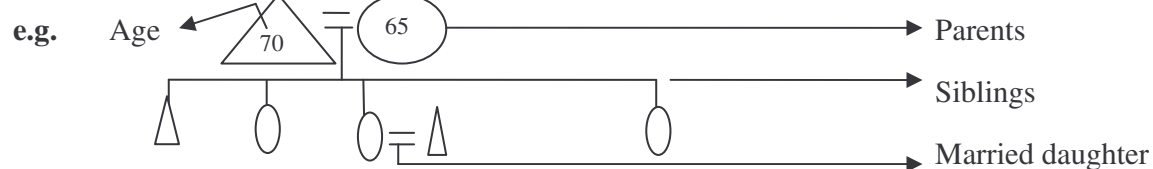
#### I. Socio-Demographic Information

Ward No. .... Form No..... Date.....

House type: Cemented      Wooden      Thatched      Mud-Stone      Other

Fire-wood stored:      Yes/No      Caste/Ethnic .....      Religion .....

1) Household Composition:  $\triangle$  = Male,  $\bigcirc$  = Female (HH members, age and sex)



#### II. Capital Owned

HH member	Level of Education	Occupation and Activity	Annual Income in Rupees	Migration Status
A				
B				
C				
D				
E				
F				
G				
H				

2) If any of your family members is away from home, does he or she help your family? Yes/ No

3) Animal Husbandry of the Household

Total No. of Animal and domestic fowl .....

4) Land owned

Khet .....Bari.....

5) What are the major productions of your land?

- a. *Karu*      b. Maize      c. Wheat      d. Buckwheat      e. Millet      f. Barley
- g. Potato      h. other (specify) .....

6) Is this production sufficient to feed the family for the whole year?    Yes                      No  
If not: - is it sufficient for?

- Less than three months
- Three months to six months
- Six months to nine months

7) If the production is not sufficient all round the year then how do you feed your family?

8) Do you own any of the following?

TV      Radio                  DVD/VCD                  Cycle                  Other (specify).....

9) Do you also own any of the following?

- a. Hotel                  b. Guest House    c. Shop    d. Bhatti (Tavern)                  e. Tractor  
f. Motorbike    g. Other (specify) .....

10) If you own any of the above, how much do you earn in a month approximately?

### III. Impact of ACAP on the Livelihoods

11) Do you know now Thini is within ACAP region?                  Yes                  No

12) Are you satisfy with this reality?

Yes / No                                  If not, Why?                                  If yes, Why?

13) Is it easy to take timber or to collect firewood or mushrooms and other uses of forest after its establishment?

14) Is it easier to graze your animals now than before its establishment?

15) ACAP region is very famous for trekking and tourism activities, and more than 50,000 tourists visit annually. Have you grasped any benefit from this development?

16) Does ACAP provide any facility to sustain your family's livelihoods?

17) In your opinion, what kind of impacts (positive + negative) have you seen in your village after the establishment of ACAP?

## **Checklist for Key Informant Interview and Field Conversation**

1. What are the customary ways of cultivation?
2. Why does a household rear the livestock?
3. How much does a farmer earn from a *Jhopa*/horse/mule in a month approximately?
4. What are other preferred occupations of the villagers in addition to the agriculture and livestock rearing?
5. How much money does a family need in a year?
6. Why does a family need money?
7. Do villagers have any institutions or traditions to manage the society and their livelihood?
8. What are the general perceptions of local people about the ACAP?
9. Does ACAP have any special programme for agricultural, livestock and other social-welfare development?
10. What are the major negative impacts of ACAP on the villagers?
11. What are the major positive impacts of ACAP on the villagers?
12. Are there any changes in the use of CPRs after the establishment of ACAP?
13. Are villagers satisfied with the new CPRs' management system i.e. CAMC?
14. How does CAMC work and function in the village?
15. How do villagers treat with its members?
16. Are villagers satisfied with the CAMC?
17. Since CPRs such as forest, water, and pastureland are very essential for the villagers, how do they use them? Do they have any rules and regulations for that?
18. Which systems, i.e. traditional CPR management system or modern management system, do you prefer? In addition, which systems do the villagers prefer?

### Appendix III: Name of the main Agriculture Fields of Thini

No.	Name in Roman script	No.	Name in Thakali language
1	Tep	१	तेप
2	Bhmcha	२	भुम्चा
3	Mori	३	मोरी
4	Lhokong	४	ल्हेकोङग
5	Jhene	५	झेने
6	Malmi	६	मल्मी
7	Laari	७	लअरी
8	Soso	८	सोसो
9	Dhomcha	९	ढोम्चा
10	Dhasyu	१०	ढास्यू
11	Bhrang	११	भुराङग
12	Lwokong	१२	ल्वोकोङग
13	Jho	१३	झो
14	Phumcho	१४	फुम्चो
15	Techo	१५	तेचो
16	Khyung	१६	ख्यूङग
17	Lhum	१७	ल्हुम
18	Ghyobhri	१८	घ्योभि
19	Mwowa	१९	म्वोवा

## Appendix IV: Thakali Words and Calendar

### Thakali – Nepali – English Words

Thakali	Nepali	English
<i>Agriculture</i>		
Banda	Banda	Cabbage
Bhar	Bari	Non-irrigated land
Bhra	Peetho	Flour
Bhram	Marcha	Yeast
Bikase Dhu	Yuriya mal	Modern Fertilizer
Cheka	Jou	Barlery
Chekabhra	Jou ko Peetho	Flour of barley
Chhimbhra	Gahun ko Peetho	Flour of wheat
Chhi	Ghans	Animal Fodder
Dho	Saag	Spinach
Dhu	Mal	Traditional or Compose manure
Gajar	Gajar	Carrot
Ghebhra	Phapar ko Peetho	Flour of buckwheat
Ghepe	Phapar	Buckwheat
Gho	Gahun	Wheat
GolBheda	GolBheda/Tamatar	Tomato
Ghyang	Roti	Bread
Karu	Uwa	A Type of grains similar to barley
Kauli	Kauli	Cauliflower
Khala	Aaru	Peach
Khalpusa	Pharsi	Pumpkin
Khorang	Khorsani	Chilly
KoBhra	Satu	Parched flour of <i>Karu</i>
Le	Khet	Irrigated land
Lhapu	Mula	Radish
Makai	Makai	Maize
Makaibhra	Makai ko Peetho	Flour of maize
Male	Rato Salgam	Red turnip
Nanam	Tori	Mustard
Nho	Lashun	Garlic
Pang	Lek	Apline
Pyaj	Pyaj	Onion
Sin	Daura	Firewood
Simi	Simi or Bodi	Bean
Syau	syaau	Apple
Taya	Aaloo	Potato
Tongo	Kerau	Pea
Dudiyā Dho	Dudiyako Saag	Types of spinach
Palung Dho	Palung ko Saag	



Pasa Dho	Rayoko Saag	
Suii Dho	Suii Saag	
<b><i>Food &amp; Drink</i></b>		
Chini Jhya	Chinee Chiya	Tea with suger
Ghyang	Roti	Bread
Hya	Bheda	Sheep
Kan	Bhat	Cooked Rice
Khu	Tiuun or Tarkari	Vegetable
Kobhra	Uwa ko Satu	Flour of parched <i>karu</i>
Mhar Jhya	Nun Chiya	Tea with salt
Naka	Kukhura	Chicken
Pa	Chhyang	Local Alcoholic Beer
Paitukhu	Dal	Lentil
Pla	Tarkari	Vegetable
Po	Khaja	Snacks
Ra	Khasi	Male Goat
Rahyaksi	Raksi	Local Alcohol
Shangnan	Dhindo	Porridge
Sitili	Sidra	Kind of small dried fish (prepared by squeezing and pressing)
Sya	Masu	Meat
Syakhar	Sukuti	Dried Meat
Tarang	Machha	Fish
<b><i>Religion</i></b>		
Chheme	Diyo or Batti	Sacred Light
Ghumba	Ghumba	Monastery
Kyuphuiu	Chokho Jal	Sacred Water
Lama	Lama	Monk
Sang	Dhup	Incense; brunt perfume
Torma	Torma	An offering cake in the monastery
<b><i>Miscellaneous</i></b>		
Bhangdi	Dhunga-Mato ko Ghar	House constructed with wood, stone and soil
Bhaladhmi, Mechen	Ward ko Pratinidhi	Ward's members
Ghyanga	Mato ko Ghar	House constructed with wood and soil
Mhi	Manchhe	Human/Man
Mon	Talako Manchhe	Man from down or low land
Mi	Aago	Fire
Phichepemhi	Paraii Manchhe	Outsider
Rangmi	Aaphno Manchhe	Insider or relative
Thuimi	Mukhiya	Headman or Cheaf of the Village

## Year in Thakalis' Calendar

(During fieldwork)

Thakali Year	Nepali Year	English Year
2134	2064	2007

## Months in Thakalis' Calendar

No.	Thakali Months	Nepali Months	English Months
1	Kupilaa (कुपील्आ)	Baishakh (बैशाख)	April/May
2	Lhulaa (ल्हुल्आ)	Jeshtha (जेष्ठ)	May/June
3	Prelaa (प्रेल्आ)	Ashadh (अषाढ)	June/July
4	Jhelaa (झेल्आ)	Saun (साउन)	July/August
5	Khilaa (खिल्आ)	Bhadou/Bhadra (भदौ)	August/September
6	Phalaa (फाल्आ)	Ashoj (अशोज)	September/October
7	Bhiplaa (भीप्ल्आ)	Kartik (कार्तिक)	October/November
8	Lhanglaa (ल्हाङल्आ)	Manshir (मंशिर)	November/December
9	Taplaa (ताप्ल्आ)	Push/Poush (पुष)	December/January
10	Bhumlaa (भुम्ल्आ)	Magh (माघ)	January/February
11	Aakhalaa (आखल्आ)	Phalgun (फाल्गुन)	February/March
12	Tyunglaa (त्युङल्आ)	Chaitra (चैत्र)	March/April

## Days in Thakalis' Calendar

No.	Thakali Days	Nepali Days	English Days
1	Sha Nhima (स्ह न्हिम)	Aaitabar (आईतबार)	Sunday
2	Sha Dhau (स्ह धउ)	Sombar (सोमबार)	Monday
3	Sha Memar (स्ह मेमर)	Mangalbar (मंगलबार)	Tuesday
4	Sha Laakpa (स्ह ल्आक्पा)	Budhabar (बुधबार)	Wednesday
5	Sha Phurwa (स्ह फूर्व)	Bihibar (बिहिबार)	Thursday
6	Sha Plsang (स्ह पल्साङ)	Shukrabar (शुक्रबार)	Friday
7	Sha Pempa (स्ह पेम्प)	Shanibar (शनिबार)	Saturday