

# Sharecropping system in mid west Tarai

A case study of Gobardiha VDC of Dangdeukhuri district, Nepal.



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**Master in Resources and Human Adaptations**

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## ABSTRACT

This study attempts to assess sharecropping system, its impact on farming practices and institutional impact on peasants' access to land resource in Dang, west Nepal. Data have been collected using questionnaire survey, group discussions and interviews with landlords and peasants during May 2009 to July 2009. The study shows that sharecropping system has emerged as the result of unequal land holding, especially due to marginalization of some *Tharu* peasants and accumulation of land to few landlords more than they can husband themselves. This inequality can be traced back to the feudal structure of country and autocratic regime of Rana until mid 20th century. Despite different land reform Act and policies, which aims to ensure poor peasants' access to land, during democratic era later on, state fails to achieve significant perceptible outcomes since the feudal structure of society has not been completely transformed and policy implementation have been failed to deal with associated different formal and informal local institutions and long existing unequal power relations that maintain unequal land distribution and 'feudal mode of production'. Consequently, sharecropping system has been continued as the ultimate livelihood option for the landless and poor marginalized peasants. The study also reveals that sharecropping system has not brought any significant changes in farming practices. Despite its contribution on livelihoods, it highly disadvantages the poor tenants in terms of unpaid labour and negotiations of share of crop output. Access to sharecropping is also mediated by local practices and different macro to micro level institutions, making poor tenants more vulnerable.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CPN (M)	Communist Party of Nepal, (Maoist)
CPN (UML)	Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist)
GDP	Gross Domestic Production
HH	Household
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
NCE	Neoclassical Economic
NIE	New Institutional Economic
MPE	Marxist Political Economic
FPE	Formalized Political Economy
CSRC	Community Self Reliance Center
NCPN	Nepali Congress Party of Nepal
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
TU	Tribhuvan University
UIB	University of Bergen
VDC	Village Development Committee

## **GLOSSARY:**

Abal	Well irrigated land with high productivity.
Agharrya	A person who is elected as village head among all gardhurryas of same village.
Arka	Other
Baluwa	Sandy
Bari	Non -irrigated land
Begari	A system in which people works without wage.
Besaune	To bye food
Bhalu	Bear (ironic meaning for harvesting without contributing)
Birta	Land awarded as good deed.
Chahar	Waste land.
Chaudhary	A functionary appointed to collect tax in past. Now, it is the sure name of Tharu.
Chhori	Daughter
Dabar	Land that has no access of canal for irrigation.
Dal	Pulses (a kind of soup of lentil or beans)
Dandaiya	Land with slope in Tharu language.
Dhakiya	A kind of domestic basket made of bamboo.
Diuhwa	Non- irrigated land with high humus.
Doyem	Non-irrigated land with high productivity.
Dumna	Small hill (Hump)
Gardhurrya	Household head, which has main responsibility of household economy.
Garne	Who works
Gautariya	Land which is irrigated and good for wheat.
Ghara	Home
Gharbari	Kitchen garden
Jabdi	Irrigated land.
Jamindar	A person with large landholding.
Jand	A kind of alcohol made by cereal crops. (Liquor)
Jane	To go
Jat	Particular group of people.
Jungle	Forest land.
Kaam	Work

Kamaiya	Bonded labor (male)
Kamlahari	Bonded labor (female)
Khane	Who eat
Khet	Irrigated land
Kipat	Land under communal ownership.
Ko	Who
Kulo	Canal
Likho	To write
Maghi-	A local festival which is celebrated as new agriculture calendar.
Makai	Maize
Mohi	Tenants (a person who has legal tenancy right)
Mohiyani	Tenancy
Odaadhksha	A person who is elected as village head of a ward by formal election.
Orginnya	Female household worker
Padho	To read
Pakho	Land with gentle slope
Panchyat	A ruling system operated by late king Mahendra
Pathraiya	Land that consists sand and gravel with low productivity.
Patwari	A village level administrator assigned by Rana to collect tax.
Praganna	An administrative unit in <i>Rana</i> regime, which consists of six/seven villages.
Pucharrya	The follower of <i>Agharrya</i>
Raikar	Land under state ownership.
Rajya	A kind of land awarded to royal relatives by state.
Rakam	A form of land tenure where cultivator had to provide unpaid labor to the state/government.
Rana	Ruler who established an autocratic regime for 104 years from 1946 to 1950.
Roti	Bread made of wheat
Sera	Land owned by royal family.
Sim	Non-irrigated land with low productivity.
Tharu	Indigenous people of Tarai.
Thulo Manchhe	Powerful person

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background:

Sharecropping is one of the many ways agricultural land is managed in Nepal. This has enabled landless peasants get access to land and has given the landlords chances to cultivate and better husband their land by the labor of peasants. In a society where traditional economy dominates, land is the most important resource by which people make their living. In this context sharecropping, which allows landless peasants to gain access to land resource is their livelihood strategy. Many acts and reform practices have been launched in Nepal to provide peasants with land right. These acts have not been effectively implemented because most of the landlords have access to power and they are likely to secure their benefit. The poor peasants always have to depend on the limited access that is provided to them by the landlords. So, this study tries to find some issues about sharecropping system of mid western Tarai region of Nepal.

### 1.2. Research problem:

Nepal is an agricultural country and agriculture is the back bone of Nepalese economy. About 65.6% (Ministry of agriculture, 2008) of total population are engaged in agriculture. It comprises about 36.1 % of GDP (ibid). Almost all agriculture activities are related with land and its usage. Though many people involve in agriculture; there is unequal distribution of agricultural land and many poor peasants lack rights to land.

This is due to the past history of land distribution. As lands were granted to certain handful person by the rulers, some person had more lands than others (Chapter Three). Traditionally lands were divided into two groups: state ownership '*Raikar*' and communal ownership '*Kipat*' (Regmi, 1976). Later on the rulers, (especially *Rana*, a group who established autocratic regime in Nepal for 104 years before 1950s) gave the state lands '*Raikar*' to their favorable person. This creates unequal land distribution among the citizens.

Currently, land ownership can be grouped into Government lands, communal lands and private lands. Governmental lands are those kinds of land which are controlled by central government for example different conservation areas, forests. The communal land means those lands under the authority of local government, and community for example community forest, school land

and *Guthi* land. These lands are managed by the community or local government authorities. Most of the cultivated and residential lands are private land in which people have total control over it. It means people have full ownership on these lands and can be sold, leased, and bequeathed (Upreti, 2002:117). However, the government has the right to acquire private and public lands for the benefit of the people by paying compensation (Ibid).

Tarai, which is also known as ‘the granary of Nepal’ is exploited by the uneven land distribution among the Tarai settlers. It was densely forested and highly malaria affected area in the past. *Tharu* are the indigenous people of Tarai, who had adopted the harsh environment especially in terms of malaria amidst complete lack of medical facility. According to Modiano et al (1991), *Tharu* people of the Tarai region in southern Nepal have an incidence of malaria about sevenfold lower than that of synpatric non-*Tharu* people. In the past particularly, different kinds of land tenure system developed in different ways in different areas. Before the emergence of modern Nepal prior to P.N. Shah (in 18<sup>th</sup> century) in Tarai, the *Pragna* which comprised a number of villages was the basic unit of land administration. A functionary called the *Chaudhari*,<sup>1</sup> was appointed from among local landowners to collect the revenue. Later on during *Rana* regime, they assigned trusted person for the responsibility of collecting tax in Terai and the land reform practice made the tax collector to be a *Jamindar*<sup>2</sup> (Regmi, 1971:33).

Nepal government launched the malaria eradication program in 1950s, and encouraged the hill natives to migrate and use the productive land of Tarai for cultivation. Hill native people migrated to plain area and occupied the cultivated land area of Tarai region. During the last 30 years of the 20th century, the densely forested frontier of the Tarai region was the target for government-sponsored resettlement and spontaneous land occupation by Hill people—*Paharis*. The indigenous occupants of the Tarai, *Tharus*, were sometimes displaced, and often disadvantaged. Indeed, the competition between the migrating *Paharis* and indigenous *Tharus* often led to the latter being forced off their land, either by corrupt land registration practices or by coercion. (Pyakuryal, 1982; Ojha, 1983; Bhandari, 1985 in Conway et al., 2000). Due to such practices *Tharus* were marginalized. Dangdeukhuri, a Tarai district, was habituated by *Tharu* since past. After resettlement program, the hill natives moved to the Dang district. Since hill natives have access to power they gained lands from rulers and became *Jamindars*. In Nepal

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<sup>1</sup> *Tharu* people use ‘Chaudhari’ as their surname.

<sup>2</sup> *Jamindar* is a person having large landholdings.

25% households have land more than 1 hectare whereas 31% households of Dang district have land more than 1 hectare (CBS, 2004).

To optimally use the land resource landlords and the tenant engage in different forms of contract. Generally, tenancy is a contractual agreement between landlord and the peasant, where landlords lease the land in return for a mutually agreed for share or sum of the production, and the tenant has right to cultivate rented land and appropriate its output (Sharma, 1984:4). There are mainly three types of agricultural contract. The one is a fixed rent where the tenant or labor lease in the land at fixed fee and the fixed fee is paid in cash or kind. The second is share tenancy where the tenant or labor lease in land and actual out put is divided equally between landlords and the tenants. And the last one is own cultivation, where landlord hired the labors in fixed wages.

In sharecropping system of mid west Tarai, the landlords and peasants shares 50/50 of any kind of agriculture product of both seasons. But it is usually not the same in all parts of the country. Especially, this type of share cropping is a contract between the landlords and peasants for one year. Each year in January an agreement is made between the peasants and landlords about the contract of sharecropping. It is because most of the *Tharu* people are the peasants and they celebrate '*Maghi*', the local festival of Tharu which falls in the month of *Magh* (mid January) according to Nepali calendar, as New Year for agricultural purposes by the peasants.

Although the production of the land is divided 50/50 between land lord and peasant, due to lack of good rules and institutions to decide share of agricultural inputs, in most of areas no one is interested to spend for the agriculture inputs such as fertilizer, hybrid seeds etc. In addition, according to Upreti, 2004, The Nepalese land resource is besieged by various problems such as contested ownership in land tenure, fragmentation, unequal distribution, institutional obstacles, and unfocused government policies. Contested ownership has been severely limiting productivity, as neither owner nor tenants invest in the land.

### **1.3. Research questions:**

The main objective of this study is to explain about the problems related to share cropping system that exist in mid west Tarai. So following questions are raised to full fill the aim.

- i. What is the situation of land tenure management in terms of sharecropping?
- ii. What are the theoretical implications of sharecropping on the study area?
- iii. What is the impact of sharecropping system on farming practice?

iv. How different institutions constraints to entitlement of peasants over tenancy land?

#### **1.4. Limitations of the study:**

This study was only carried out through the western part i.e. Dang district of Nepal. The data were collected within 3 months in May to July 2009. Generally this time when I collected data is busy time of a farmer for summer cropping. In this time they are busy for cropping mainly maize and paddy, the main staple crops of Tarai. I could not get sufficient access for the collection of data. So, I just collected data with selected respondents of each wards<sup>3</sup>. Similarly this study only focuses the current land tenure system and sharecropping. It also shortly describes peasants' access to get right over the land.

#### **1.5. Relevancy of the study:**

Sharecropping and its efficiency in agricultural production is a great debate among the scholars. Some of them have the view that it is inefficient because neither party are interested for different kinds of agricultural inputs. Some scholars say that it is an efficient way of land management because labor force of peasant and capital (land) of landlords are properly utilized. This study tries to find about the efficiency of the sharecropping system. This study also tries to find either share cropping system is good for the optimal land use or this is an obstacle to modernize agriculture system or the base. This study also tries to find the efficiency of sharecropping system as well as it explores the optimal land use in terms of modernization of agricultural system. Sharecropping system is also known as a system of exploiting local poor people for getting access to right over land, unpaid labor and other. This is also the issue of current research. This study will shade some light on these issues.

The systems of sharecropping and the tenants' rights are coupled with land reform policies of Nepalese political parties. Though different Land Acts were held, they are not able to grant land title to peasants. The existence of sharecropping system is also known as a barrier to provide peasant with land rights. There is social injustice to the peasants in land. This research tries to find out the constraints that exist to provide land entitlement to peasants. This research will give some light on these topics. Many organizations are engaged to enhance the peasants' status and there were many efforts made to redistribute land to the actual farmer. So, this study will be good for them too.

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<sup>3</sup> Ward is a small administrative section of the Village development committee.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *2. Theoretical approaches*

#### **2.1. Background:**

The theories about Farming system approach, theories about share cropping and entitlement approach in resource management is applied as the guide line for the study. The farming system approach provides an integrated and multi disciplinary approach to analyses any problems of the agrarian-society. Sharecropping theories guide exploring the cause of its existence. And the entitlement approach is the best way that helps to understand the institutional constraints and poor peoples' access to local resources as well as their access to sharecropping.

#### **2.2. Farming system approach:**

The farming system guideline discusses the nature of farming system research and development, process and methodologies appropriate for various conditions, and alternative means for the implementation. Most of the applied work in farming system research and development has been with cropping system (Shaner et.al., 1982:3). According to Shaner et.al. (1982:3), "the farming system is the complex arrangement of soils, water resources, crops, livestock, labor, and other resources and characteristics within an environmental setting that the farm family manages in accordance with its preferences, capabilities, and available technologies." So, it is not an easy task to analyze farming system without proper guidelines. They further says that farming system research and development is an approach to agriculture research and development that

- Views the whole farm as a system.
- Focuses on (1) the interdependencies between the components under the control of members of the farm house holds and (2) how these components interact with the physical, biological, and socioeconomic factors not under the household's control. (ibid: 13).

In their book 'Comparative farming system' Turner and Brush (1987), explain more rigorously the farming system approach. They argue that farming system is "a loosely defined, interdisciplinary approach to the study of agriculture that has developed, in part, as a reaction to sectoral and disciplinary approach" (ibid:3). The farming system has several sub systems. According to Turner and Brush (1987:13), in farming system three major sub systems can be identified, namely: human, environmental and genetic. While explaining these sub-systems they added that human sub system focuses on the social components of agriculture such as labor



intensity, land tenure system, land use, communication and diffusion of innovation.

Environmental subsystem focuses on the environmental components of agriculture such as climates, soil, water, and land types. And the genetic subsystem focuses on the genetic components of the agriculture such as genotypes and phenotypes of crops and animals (ibid: 13-14). Generally, a student of social sciences focuses on the human sub system for the agriculture research. So, I have focused on the human sub system.

The human sub system of the farming systems concerned with mobilize land, labor and other resources for agriculture production (Turner and Brush,1987:14). They described four different aspects of human sub system farming systems: customs and rules, institutional frameworks, population and technology (ibid: 15).

### **2.3. Theory of share cropping:**

According to Cheung (1969) “Share tenancy is a land lease under which the rent paid by the tenant is contracted percentage of the output yield per period of time. As a rule the landowner provides land and the tenant provides labor; other inputs may be provided by either party.”(ibid: 3). It is a contract between landlord and the peasant where both parties seek their maximum return. There is general hypothesis among sharecropping theories that “Smallholder farmers tend to have abundant labor relative to land, their scarce factor, and hence maximize output per unit of land. Large holder farmers, conversely, tend to maximize output per unit of labor.” (Yotopolous, 1977 in Brush & Turner, 1987:?).

The discussion of the theoretical literature on sharecropping begins with Adam Smith. He focused on two central issues of share cropping systems: the impact of product sharing on labor effort, and its implications for capital accumulation and on-farm investment (Smith, 1976:389–391 in Pearce, 1983:45). Adam Smith (1976) viewed share cropping as progressive because it replaced the traditional serfdom practice. It also provides chance to greater use of labors’ time. Any family with high labor availability can use their optimal labor to produce more. However, the disadvantage of share cropping is the lack of stimulus towards investment by both parties. If production of land is greater than wage labor the peasants will not be eager to share more production with landlords. On the other hand, if landlords invest in inputs the production will be shared and the landlord will not benefited as much as by fixed rent. These disincentives would ultimately lead to the low yielding of sharecropping to fixed rent contracts. (Pearce, 1983:45).

Another view of sharecropping is presented by Marshall (1961). His view about sharecropping is known as the 'traditional' view. If there is contract between landlord and peasant to divide equal proportion of the output then the tenant will not invest resources beyond the level where the marginal cost of output is equal to half the value of the marginal product. Similarly the landlord will not invest unless the marginal product of such investment is equal to a minimum of twice the marginal cost. Thus equilibrium levels of resource allocation resulting from share contracts will be less than under systems of owner occupation or fixed rents. It follows, therefore, that total per hectare rent accruing to the landlord and total per hectare product will be less than optimal. (Ibid: 53). Neo classical economics (NCE) see sharecropping in terms of 'efficiency' and explains that man are rational and their behavior is guided by the market relations (profit/loss).

New Institutional Economics (NIE) sees the existence of sharecropping in terms of uncertainty, imperfect information and transactional cost. It sees sharecropping as efficiency to agriculture production. Cheung [1968, 1969] was the first to formally outline not only how sharecropping might be as productive as other forms of contract, but also the contexts in which it might be the preferred contract. His model is also known as land owner model. He says that land owner controls amount of labor input, share and size of parcels. Cheung (1969) explains mainly two reasons for the existence of contract from: natural risk and different transactional cost. He explains that in fixed rent all risk is bear by the tenants and in own cultivation by the landlord. So, under postulate of risk aversion, an individual will seek to avoid risk if the cost of doing so is less than gain from risk averted (ibid,1969:63). He says motivation for work of tenant is greater than in the case for wage labor because share tenant is more interested to product. "Given landowners' ability to limit the supply of land available to tenants, they are able to induce an optimum application of tenant inputs through manipulation of the rental share and size of the tenants' parcel of land: the constraint on landlords' bargaining strength being the alternative income tenants might earn in other activities" (Pearce, 1983:47). The only constraint is that contract must allow tenant to earn at least as much as a wage laborer. This means that there is not more advantage for the tenant. It further clears that under sharecropping, motivation for work of tenant is greater than in the case for wage labor because share tenant is more interested to product. It also suggests that under fixed rent, all risk is borne by tenants; under wage labor, all risk is borne by land lord. But share tenancy represents a mechanism for sharing the risk between landlords and peasants.

Eswaran and Kotwal (1984), specially criticize the idea of Cheung (1969) that share cropping is a form of agriculture practice for risk sharing. There is plenty of examples that show it is in practice in less risky area and crop. Sharecropping can not be explained only by risk sharing strategy rather it could be explained by the skills of people. Eswaran and kotwal (1985) explain the sharecropping in terms of '*dual moral hazard model*'. In this model they focus on two unmarked resources: the ability to supervise labor; and the managerial skill to make production decisions based on technical know how and market information. They assume that in contract, family labor is crucial resource and it is easier to supervise family labor than hired labor. They explained that the peasants have better 'supervision' skill than the landlord and the landlords hold good 'managerial' skill due to his interact with traders and financial institutions (ibid, 1985:354). Neither in fixed rent nor own cultivation can the landlord and the peasant use their skills optimally. They assume that tenant has incentive to shrink in work and land lord has incentive to shrink in management. There is not any market for supervision or management.

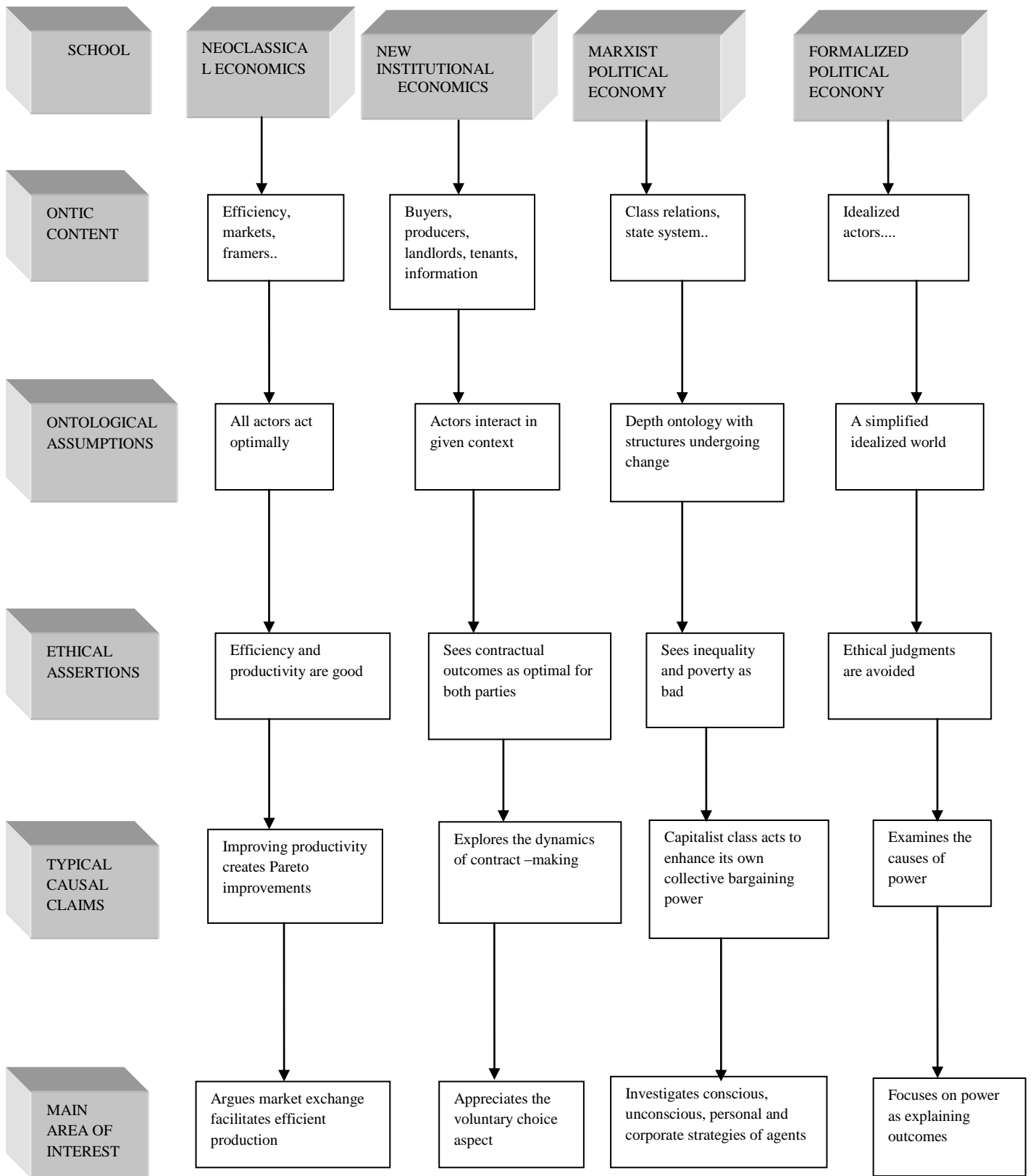
Above all models assumes that tenants are landless or lack in land. But these models do not explain about the cause of poverty of the peasants. The Marxist political economy (MPE) explains the cause of being poor and the existence of sharecropping as well. This views class relations as the root cause of the existence of any kind of contract form. According to Pearce (1983), landlords are always interested in surplus production and peasants have always more labors. The landlord compares the investment between fixed and sharecropped lands and availability of labors. In share cropping system landlords can get cheap labor with less investment, so he usually favors sharecropping system. "According to the Marxist political economy analyses, renting land out is done by powerful households who prefer to arrange (some) cheap labor this way rather than through the casual or permanent laboring contact" (Olsen, 2006:1139). It can be said that previous theories only sees individual as response of the poverty whereas Marxian model focuses social structure (i.e. class relation, caste) as main cause for the poverty.

The Marxist views on sharecropping can be further explained by the theory of historical materialism model. Historical materialism explains the development of society and production relation based on the concept of dialectical materialism. It argues that the production relation in the given time in the society produced a special economic structure of the society. Here, production relation means relation of men to the production assets and productive forces like land, natural resources, technology (Cohen, 2000:63).

Marxist sees the development of society from one mode of production relation to another is due to the class struggle between opposite sides (Stalin, 1940). Class refers to the group having common positions in the social relations of production (Wright, 1980:326). A person's class is established by a person's place in the network of production relation (Cohen, 2000:73). Generally Marxist divides people into two group 'haves' and 'haves not'. The struggle between these two groups is the fundamental for the development of the society. According to historical materialism five main types of relations of production are known yet: primitive communal, slave, feudal, capitalist and socialist. The primitive communal society was egalitarian in its nature without any classes. In slave system the boss had total control over the slaves. They even buy or sell the slaves. In feudal society the lords or feudal have control over the production means (land) and they exploit the peasant (i.e. bonded labor) and their labor. In capitalism the proletariat are exploited by the bourgeois through the system of surplus value.

Marxist views that the existence of sharecropping is in the transition period between feudal to capitalist society. According to Pearce (1983 :42) "sharecropping emerges from complete forms of labor control". In slavery system the landowner had total control over the labor power and in feudal society he partly controls the labor power. But between transitions to feudal to capitalist the landowner had not total control over the labor power and tries to exploit the peasants through sharecropping to use cheap labor of the peasant community.

Olsen (2006) has summarized all of tenancy theories. He also added that tenancy agreements should be analyzed with different ideas. He presents a summarized figure of different tenancy theories in a figure which is given below (fig 2.1). From figure 2.1, we can come to conclusion that NEC (neoclassical economy) and NIE (new institutional economy) give priority to individual. These theories claim an individual as rational actor. Whereas MPE (Marxist political economy) and FPE (formalized political economy) emphasis in the structure of the society. They focus class or other kinds of social hierarchy and differences as the root cause of poverty. So sharecropping system should be analyzed in terms of structure and agency. Olsen (2006) further added that productivity, power and choice are common themes about which different theoretical debate has occurred (Olsen 2006:1144). Thus pluralist approach is the best way to describe poverty.



**Figure 2.1: Key theories of tenancy**

Source: Olsen, 2006.

By realizing it I tried to analyze the tenancy with reference to different school. While analyzing the cause to choose share cropping, its existence, its role in poverty reduction, I keep all theories related to sharecropping in mind. I also interested in finding out among these, which theory is giving better explanation.

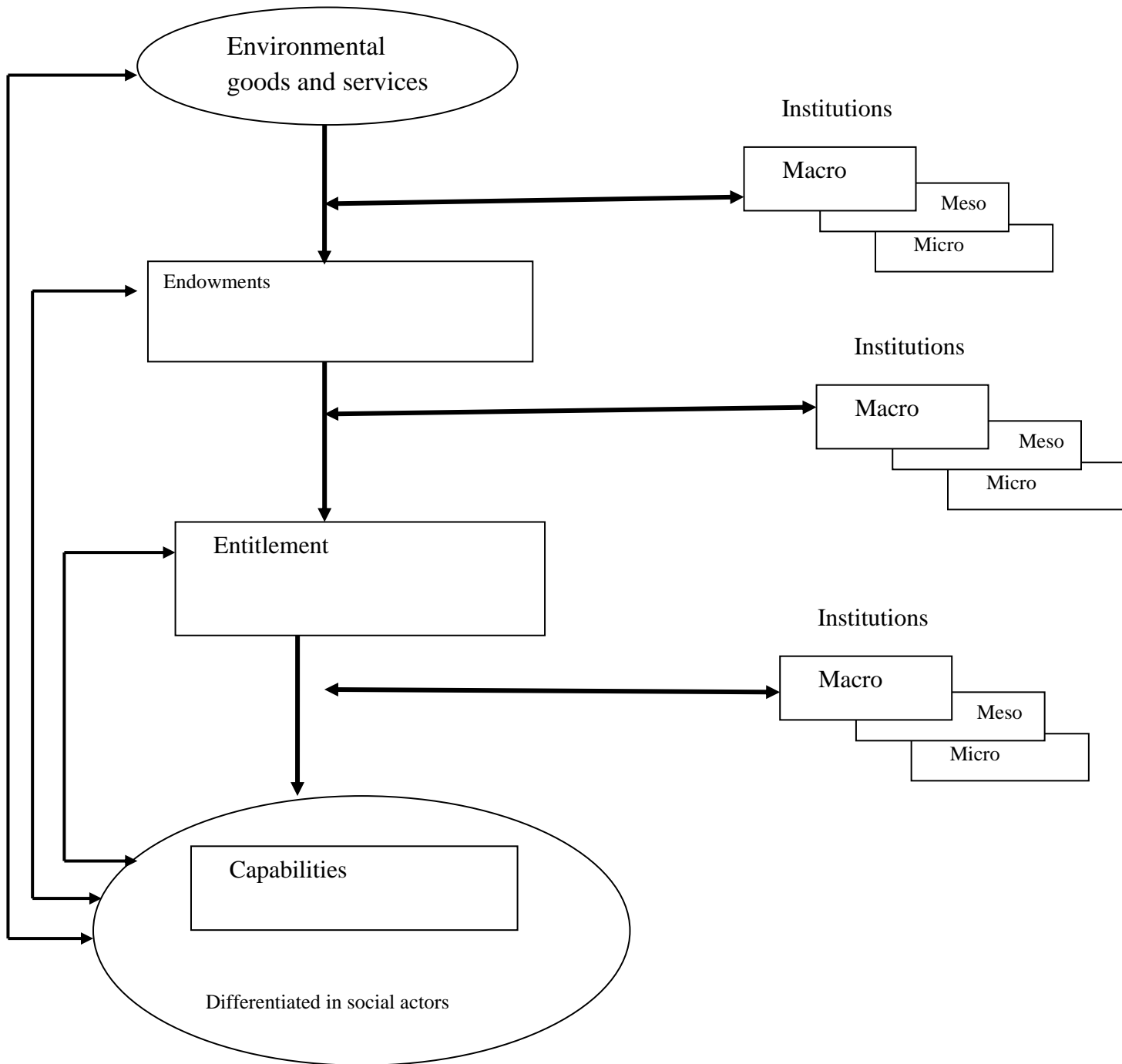
#### **2.4. Entitlement approach:**

The entitlement approach evaluates the power relations and structures in explaining peoples' access to natural resources. It tries to focus on the social differentiation and local practice of resource rights. As apposed to community development approach (which sees community as a homogenous unit) it tries to focus on the formal and informal institutions that constraints or provide opportunities to poor people to be entitled with their endowments.

Leach et al. (1997:9) defines environmental entitlement as “alternative sets of benefits derived from environmental goods and services over which people have legitimate effective command and which are instrumental in achieving well being”. Environmental entitlement approach focuses on the implication of intra-community dynamics and ecological heterogeneity and highlights the central role of institutions in mediating the relationships between environment and society. An institution is considered as “the regularized pattern of behavior” (Leach et al, 1999:237) between individuals and groups in society. Institutions are identified with a social purpose and performance making rules governing human behaviors. It is a concern for the law either formal or informal. Formal law depicts the political laws made by the administration where as informal indicates existing norms or rules which is not written but applied properly in the practice. The characteristics of community like size, composition, dependency, existing norms, and employed technology have impact on resource management due to the interactions between different actors. These interactions are shaped by the existing social institutions. Moreover, institutions delimit the access to resources.

The community is explained as homogenous group but in reality it is not necessarily homogenous rather there are various diverse groups of people with different ideas, values and roles. A community has different institutions which is dynamic in nature. Peoples' social positions are defined by gender, wealth, age, history, etc. The interactions between people in a community and between those people and their environment are regulated by certain norms and rules, which can be of formal or informal kind. These set of rules and norms, that facilitate interaction between individuals in a community, are what we define as ‘institutions’. Institutions are thus “seen as mediators of people-environment relations” (Leach et al, 1999:226).An important point that is better considered when applying the institutions perspective is the process of entitlements-endowments in social interaction. People living in a certain community have certain entitlements, and endowments. In the process of turning certain entitlements into endowments, people have to negotiate with certain established hierarchies. Institutions play the

role of negotiators or mediators. So, I analyze tenant's access to land by using same frame work. The framework in the context of peasants' access to land resource is given below.



**Figure 2.2: Environmental entitlements frame work. (Adopted from Leach etal. 1999).**

This frame work is used to analyze the local (Micro) institutional arrangements that help peasants to get landlords' land for sharecropping. Similarly this frame work also is used to understand local and national level institutional constraints for the peasants to get their rights on share cropped land as defined by different Land Acts.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. Overview of National level policies on land:

#### 3.1. National level:

Land is an important source of livelihood for the people in a traditional agricultural economy. It also symbolizes the power and a kind of prestige in the society. The more land one holds the more respected person s/he is. In the past the land resources were controlled by state authorities and their relatives. There was lack of lands to the actual peasant. Government has attempted to provide land for the poor by launching different policies. However they have always favored the elites in the context of unequal power relations. Till now, the state itself has not been able to ensure the poor people's access to land.

In ancient time, lands were regulated by the local authorities of different small principalities<sup>4</sup>. At that time land tenure in Nepal was either state or communal ownership (Regmi, 1971). The former one is known as *Raikar* (land with state ownership) and later one is *Kipat* (land with communal ownership). These were the main bases of land tenure system in Nepal. At that time the *Raikar* land were cultivated by peasants. They paid tax of those land used by them in kind to the government but they did not have rights to use those lands for sell and mortgage. *Kipat* was a traditional form of communal land ownership where the head of the community had the responsibility to provide land to cultivate the community members (Upreti, 2002). But there was no right for the peasant to sell and mortgage those lands too. After unification of Nepal by king P.N. Shah (in mid 18<sup>th</sup> century), Shah Kings changed all *Kipat* land to state ownership or *Raikar* for tax purpose. But some lands in eastern region remained *Kipat* because there was an agreement between Shah Dynasty and the local *Limbu* (ethnic group of eastern Nepal) principalities and *Kirat* (ethnic groups, especially *Rai*, *Limbu*) Pradesh (Caplan, 1970).

The *Raikar* land was further divided to different forms like *Birta*, *Jagir*, *Guthi*, *Rakam*, *Rajya* and *Sera*. All these kinds of division were done by *Rana*, a group who established autocratic regime in Nepal for 104 years before 1950s. During their regime, state gave some lands with property rights to individual as award in the form of *Birta* for good deed, who had good relation with *Rana*. At the same time, some lands were also granted to the temples and monasteries, which were known as *Guthi*. Some lands were given to public employers as their salaries, which

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<sup>4</sup> In ancient time Nepal was divided into different small principalities.



were known as *Jagir* (Regmi, 1971). But the *Jagir* lands could be cultivated by a person until s/he remains the public employee. *Rakam* is another form of land tenure where cultivators had to compulsorily provide unpaid labors to the government. *Rajya* was another form of land tenure granted to the relatives of Royal families as a state awards. Royal families used to keep some land to fulfill their food needs, which was known as *Sera* (Upreti, 2002). Especially, during *Rana* regime, individual lands were granted to noble people- *the Brahmins* (high cast group of Nepal, the priest group) and royal relatives (Regmi, 1976). They all have individual land rights. This caused some people who did not have access to power to remain peasants. During the *Rana* regime those land which were not granted to others as previously mentioned categories, were under state ownership or *Raikar*. These lands were cultivated by peasants and they paid tax to the government. To regulate tax collection and management of lands, *Ranas* appointed different individuals in different areas as tax collector called *Mukhiyas*. Those who used to collect tax became *Jamindars*. They gave lands to the peasants in turn, charged tax to the peasants in kind. They used to keep the food grains that was collected as land tax for them and paid back small amount of grains as tax to the government.

After the downfall of *Rana* regime in the 1950, the democratic government of Nepal tried to provide land to the peasants by launching different policies and acts. But all these were not implemented well or some decisions were relegated. For example, In November 1950, government of Nepal tried to abolish the sharecropping system and other form of contract system on land. But unfortunately, the government formed after tri-party agreement in New Delhi ordered the return of all such lands to landlords (Thapa 2001, Upreti et al, 2009). The government of Nepal also tried to abolish *Jamindari* system and provide land title to tenants who paid taxes or rent for the land they cultivated. Tenancy rights acquisition act (TRAA) was introduced in 1952 for this purpose. According to this act lands would be granted to those who had record of rented land and paid tax to the government. The Taxes and rents paid by individual tenants had not been recorded in the state tax records. Instead, landlords/ *Mukhiya* had entered their own names as tax payers on the lands they were appointed to collect tax by the *Ranas*. Thus, the land ownership transferred to the *Mukhiyas* because they had record of paid tax and the actual peasant remain landless. (Josh& Mason, 2007:401).

After introduction of Democracy, government of Nepal launched different land reform acts and policies. Among them the Land Act 1957, tried to give tenants security against eviction but it was not implemented well. In 1959 *Birta* abolition act was launched. The *Birta* system of land

was abolished. According to this act, all *Birta* lands would be converted to private land by providing ownership rights to recorded tenants on such land (Adhikari, 2008). Though this act tried to distribute land for peasants who cultivated these lands with their labor, there was no record of peasant who cropped those lands. So the landlords or the person, who had been awarded *Birta* system on such lands, put their name as cultivator and were granted for land. Only what changes in this act, is the person who used this land in past without paying tax had to pay. There was not fixed land ceiling size for a person, so any one could keep as much land as he could, in his/her name.

In 1961, and 1963 the system of *Rajya* and *Rakam* lands were abolished. Again, the Land Act 1964 was launched to divert the pressure of growing population on land and use of capital in other sources of economy. This act defined tenancy conditions, ownership rights and the ceiling for holding land. This Act also tried to grant tenants to have half proportion of legal ownership on the land they tenanted for more than one year. Still now this amendment has not been practiced well (Upreti, 2002). Upreti (2002:115) further says that the provision of act to have written receipts of the payment of their share from the landowner to claim tenancy right, had negative impact to the tenant. If a tenant asks for written receipts from landlord, tenant will loose the contract. This has further marginalized the tenant with food shortage. This act has negative impact on community land. It gives legal ownership to the individual household of the community on the land they cultivate, which results the 'ethnic' communities to become small landholders (Ibid). The Land Act 1964 and land rules 1964 introduced a fixed ceiling on land holdings and land consolidation measures. The landlords immediately transferred any land above the amount to their relatives and other family members or put them in the name of agriculture industries (Estates), and able to keep their control over the land resources (Upreti, 2002). Landlords were able to transfer the land above the ceiling in another person's name because this Land Act already announced its term before its implementation and this act adopted phased implementation strategy (Joshi & Mason, 2007:405).

The 1964 reforms of the *Panchayat* (an autocratic rule by King during 1960 to 1990) *regimes* served to continue the agrarian status quo and protect the landed gentry. The state was not able to redistribute land to the peasant because almost all government officials are elite group with big landholdings. They were able to control peasants by providing them some lands in contract and mobilized grassroots support for the *Panchayat* system. The king had to protect the interest of the landlords to secure his throne because some radical groups/ political parties were against the

*Panchayat* rule (Joshi & Mason, 2007:405). This clarifies that the state authorities were also interested to secure their interest rather than to act for justice.

After re-introduction of democracy in 1990 by people's revolution, the democratic government again attempted to fulfill its responsibility to redistribute land to the peasants. But the government did not initiate any radical Land Reforms Acts but just improved some amendments on the previous Land Acts. In 1994 government headed by Manmohan Adhikari made a high level commission to land reform (called Badal commission). It reported all necessary information of land and peasants and gave different reformative recommendations and suggestions but has not implemented yet (Adhikari, 2008:69). Due to the Maoist insurgency and pressure from land rights activities, the government forced for the fifth amendments to the 1964 Land Act in 2001. This made provision to lower the land ceilings up to 6 hectare. But the law was immediately replaced by the Supreme Court because it was seen as unconstitutional due to individual property rights (CSRC, 2009:23). This was a general outline of land reform acts and their implication on providing land to the actual cultivator. These Land Acts though tried to provide land to the peasants, it made difficult for peasants to collect evidences for claiming the tenancy rights.

### **3.2. Local Level:**

The Deukhuri valley was inhabited by *Tharu* since past. Tarai was relatively isolated and abandoned due to malaria-infested jungle. At that time shifting cultivation was the main livelihood strategy of the *Tharus*. The present life style of the local *Tharu* provides evidences for the past as their houses still have a temporary character and people can shift with limited effort (Gurung, 2002: 339). Before the emergence of modern Nepal prior to P.N. Shah, Dangdeukhuri was under the rule of Salyan Kingdom. At that time the *Tharu* paid tax to the Kingdom via the *Chaudhari*. They used to pay tax in kind (McDonaugh, 1989:193). At that time, the *Pragnna* which comprised a number of villages was the basic unit of land administration. A functionary called the *Chaudhari*, was appointed from among local landowners to collect the revenue. Though this area was settled by *Tharu* since past, they had not rights to sell or mortgage these lands due to their lack of access in power. Before *Rana* regime they used to give land tax in kind. But later *Ranas* introduced land tax in cash. The *Ranas* gave the responsibility of collecting tax to the hill native. The person who collected tax was known as *Mukhiya* (the chief). They used to collect tax by those peasants who used those lands for cultivation. The peasants at that time were known as *Raiti* (a person who cultivate landlords land). The *Mukhiyas* also assigned different

*Patwari* (village level chief) in different villages to see the land uses and to collect the tax. The tenancy right acquisition act (TRAA) 1952 had the amendment to give the land to those people who had the record of paid tax. The *Mukhiya*, who used to collect tax, recorded his/her name as a tax payer. So land was granted to them. At that time there was not amendment of fixed ceiling so they could keep as much land as they had control. Similarly some *Patwari* had also the record of tax payers, so they also got some lands. Especially in past local *Tharu* who had good relations with *Mukhiya*, were assigned as *Patwari*. So some *Tharu* people had also good control over the land. Means some *Tharu* people had also lot of land in their name. These kinds of practice were found all over the country. These types of cases are also explained by Upreti (2004). This way local *Tharu* who did not have access to power remain landless.

Mainly after Resettlement Program (in 1950s), which was launched after malaria eradication, many hill natives came here and bought the lands from *Mukhiya*. Similarly when Land Act of 1964, tried to confine the land ceiling per person, the *Mukhiyas*, who had large amount of land, sold it to the hill natives because of their good relationship. And the local *Tharu* people remained landless. This is also the cause that many hill natives bought the lands of *Mukhiyas* at a cheaper price and the land was fragmented causing small land holding size of people.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. *Methods of the study*

This section describes the methods that were applied to collect data during my field visit. I used questionnaire survey, interviews, group discussions and observations as my tools to collect information.

#### **4.1. Data source:**

My study is related to farming system and land tenancy, data were collected by using above mentioned tools with the responses of farmers and landlords. Additionally, some secondary data sources were consulted, representing some NGOS/INGOS reports on related situation. Some books (reflection, *Bhumiadhikar* (land right)) of CSRC (community self reliance centre) issues, journals and magazines, and *Nepal Ain Sangraha* (Collection of Nepalese acts) are used as secondary sources to analyze some legal provisions.

#### **4.2. Sampling:**

Data were collected with household level as the sampling unit. To determine the sample size, at first I needed data at whole population level. Village development committee (VDC) is the smallest administrative unit and source of data at local level in Nepal but it lacks digital database management system. Documents containing all data were lost when the office was burnt down as a consequence of violent ethnic revolution going on in the study area during my field study period. I had another alternative- the voters' list. However, it was not devoid of problems. Firstly, it did not contain data of land ownership and secondly it was not completely updated. It sometimes included persons who had already died or out-migrated and excluded some who were recently in-migrated. With the help of the local people as key informants, I updated the data. Then I chose some sharecroppers and some landlords from each ward. This study thus stands on responses of those who are selected.

#### **4.3. My role and status:**

I went to Nepal in April. Then I stayed Kathmandu for a week to visit libraries and different NGOs and INGOs working on land management issues. This time I also elaborated my questionnaire and checklist for the group discussion and interview. Then I went Gobardiha VDC of Dang district (which is also my home village) for data collection. In my initial days in the

field I did not succeed to meet respondents due to the strike of 'Tharuhath' (a political group specially concerned with *Tharu* people) movement. The local *Tharu* peoples were involved in the strike. I spent these days with my family members which was wonderful for me.

A researcher has his own status in the society and it may affect to the quality of the data. "The status of any individual means the sum total of all the statuses which s/he occupies. It represents his position with relation to the local society" (Linton, 1936:113). In my field, my status as a local inhabitant thus brought both prospects and problems on the quality of data.

In the initial phase, when I just met friends (who were key informants), local villagers considered me as one who just come to talk with friends. After few days I informed my respondents and went to them with questionnaire. In this phase sharecroppers suspected me because I already had the status of 'Baje' (the term given to boss or landlord in local *Tharu* language) in my field. The sharecroppers thought that I came to them to know their activities that I might want to know about the sharecroppers' political and organizational activities and their unity against the landlords. By this they feared that their reality would flash out and they would not get land for sharecropping the next year.

This situation made me think that I would never be successful in acquiring the required information. Then I asked for some help from local *Tharu* friends whom I knew well. I went with them and introduced myself as a student of university. When I said that I was studying in a foreign university then sharecroppers thought me as powerful person (*Thulo manchhe*). This status also stimulated in them some expectations that made them intentionally exaggerate their problems. They thought that I could support them practically; some of them even demanded irrigation facilities to be provided to the peasants by making financial and technical assistance from the Nepal government as well as the government of the country where I was studying!

By realizing that this status would also affect my study, I started to visit sharecroppers frequently. I visited them with my friend, while visiting them I usually went with those friends who were closely related to the sharecroppers' party. The local level political institution is highly embedded in our society. People can't trust easily with anyone else. My ability to speak local *Tharu* language helped me to gain a status of a friend as well as a student. Each time I went and had informal talks. I also convinced them that I could not meet their expectation. I was just a student and was with them to know their problems. Then only I got the status of researcher from sharecropper's side.

I also consulted with the landlords. When I went to landlords with questionnaire in first phase, I was regarded as Maoist cadre. Maoist, the revolutionary communist party has been demanding a decrease of the share to the landlord down to 1/3; land to tiller and revolutionary land reform, I also asked such questions. So they suspected me to be one who came to know about it.

**Table 4.1: My acquired given status and associated role expectations.**

Phase		Peasants		Landlords	
		Acquired status position	Role Expectations	Acquired status position	Role Expectations
1.	Initial entry	A villager	Moving around wards and meeting with friends	A villager	Moving around the village to meet friends
	Introduction	Student	To study the life world of the villagers	student	To understand life world of villagers
	Introduction to respondents with questionnaire in fields or in home.	'Baje' (a boss , especially to the landlords)	He came to know about us our activity by which it may affect him or his social group (i.e. Landlord).	<i>Maoist cadre</i>	May want to know our land and seize our land if found more than permitted?
2.	Involvement and trying to work with and receiving help from the local leaders.	'Sir' means highly educated person, member of any NGOs as well as a cadre of the party.	He can do some good for us he may provide us irrigation facility as well as provide us lands.	Student	He just came to know about sharecropping system. He knows more than us because he is also a landlord.
3.	From rapport building phase to establishing myself as a Nepali student studying abroad and intend to get local problems and try to solve it in future.	A student/ researcher who is now well known among all the villagers.	Talk and spend time with locals. He came just to know something about sharecropping system	A student/ researcher	Informal relation, a friend just came to us to know some problems of sharecropping system. He came to spend extra time in informal talks including research.

Farmers actively participated in group discussion because they had a hope that I could do something. They asked me if I could bring an irrigation canal in that area which would help them

to irrigate the land and they could produce more. Though I convinced them that I can't do anything they actively participated in the group discussion. They said that this kind of discussion could help them to get information. When I was organizing group discussions they discussed with each other about legal provisions and the system of dividing production in other places.

I felt some problems when asking landlords for the group discussion. They did not try to gather for my study. Later on, I tried to meet them in certain areas where they gathered. For example I met them in the *Chautari* (a place where roads meet and people gather to have some talks in the evening), and they were ready to participate in discussions. Sometimes, I went to the landlords with local leaders who shared the same political ideas as the landlord. Later on when I introduced myself as the student of a foreign university they also asked me more about my university and the country where I studied. Then my status changed to a student and I was able to make good relations with landlords. As being the status of student, later on I asked questions about the sharecropping system and they now regard me as researcher. I was not able to collect more information through group discussions with landlords. They usually were busy with their work and could not be able to provide time for me. So I collected some data with landlords in the *Chautari*, or any areas where landlords gathered. In such areas I made group interviews with landlords.

#### **4.4. Questionnaire survey:**

In the first phase of the study I collected data by filling questionnaires. It helped me to get demographic, economic as well as landholding information. I took questionnaire surveys with 27 numbers of landlords and 46 numbers of peasants from this VDC. (APPENDIX I)

#### **4.5. Interview:**

Interviews are an excellent method of gaining access to information about events, opinions and experiences (Hay, 2005). Among different kinds of interviewing in-depth interview is an excellent way to get the real picture of the problem from the respondents. In in-depth interview, the researcher interviews without using any kinds of devices (copy, tape recorder etc). This provides an easy situation to the respondents to convey all the problems. To understand the complex pattern of the land tenure system some selected persons from both sides, landlords and tenants were asked for in depth interview. I took interview with some respondents of each ward. I tried to collect data from the different age groups and ethnic groups. Respondents were selected by the help of key informants as well as by using snowball sampling.



#### **4.6. Group discussion:**

Focus group discussion was held during the study. I specially organized group discussion of 6 to 8 peoples from different age and sex to get the information like patterns of land management, impact of sharecropping on cropping pattern, local level institutions to get access to land for sharecropping.



**Photo 4.1: Group discussion**

#### **4.7. Key informants' interview and informal talks:**

Each society has some dominant person. They have good knowledge of society and people. Further they have power (in different way: religious, political,) to control over the villager's decision roles and to make rules and regulations for the society. Such persons' idea may be important in research. So, to understand local customs and tradition and politics, some well known persons like the head of the village, head of the VDC members, and some local leader of different political parties were selected and interviewed.

I collected some important data about institutions and their role to give access over resources through key informant interview. I selected those peasants who had long practice of sharecropping as my key informants. I also took landlords, who had given their land for peasant to crop for many years, as my key informants.

To get further information I asked a parliament member of our area about sharecropping. He is affiliated to Maoist party. I also had informal talks with the candidate of parliament members of other parties at local level. It helped me to understand the local level institution and the activities of different institutions to control over the access.

#### **4.8. Observation and field notes:**

Observation is an important means for research. Observation means seeing and knowing about phenomena. According to Hey (2005:193) “Observation is the outcome of active choice rather than mere exposure. Our choice- whether conscious or unconscious of first, what to see, and second, how to see it, means that we always have an active role in observation process.” Since I am also a member of this sharecropping system I fully employed observation in my research.

We cannot usually observe directly without being present, and our bodily presence brings with it personal characteristics that mark our identity such as race, sex and age, belonging to dominant group in society can mean that we carry with us power dynamics linked to such affiliation (Dyck and Kearns, 1995 in Hay, 2005:197). Being a landlord and male my presence and my identity also affected the respondent to collect data I was fully aware about it while doing participant observation.

Since I was born in this village I had observed the practice of share cropping throughout my childhood. I was an insider researcher for this study. I am a landlord so I have many ideas about landlords in this study. During my field study I observed the use of modern technology in agriculture and its impact in sharecropping.

I also prepared field notes with relations to what I observed. Some important notes were always noted down in the separate field diary during field visit, which could be useful for the interpretation some hidden realities.

#### **4.9. Data reliability and validity:**

Data reliability refers to the consistency of the collected data whereas validity is related to the valid and legitimacy of the data. According to Hammersley (1992) *reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions* (in Silverman, 2006:282).

I have tried to check the reliability by comparing the data through observation and with informal talks to respondents. I tried to validate data by using triangulation. I especially use data triangulation and method triangulation for it (Decrop, 1999 :?). While doing field work I was always aware of the intentions of the respondent. The validity of data was verified by using triangulation method. I carefully checked validity of the data during my study. As we know that

each human being had certain ideology or their own way of understanding the world. As a researcher first I was aware about it. I tried to collect same information from different field instruments.

When I went to respondents with questionnaire they some times hesitated to provide real information by thinking that the paper used may be some evidence. Then I went freely to them and talk in that time, so they responded well. After having informal discussion with respondents I corrected previous mistake in the evening in my field notes. Similarly, different focus group discussions were held and I tried to get more information from these group discussions.

Some time while doing interview with respondents, some neighbors of the respondents came to the respondents home and gather. Some time they even try to response instead of the real respondents. In such case I divert my discussion to other way. And I used to go the respondents again in his home and visited them separately.

As I earlier explained that to build up rapport with respondents, in previous day I went to the respondents with local friends who know them well. After having good relations I went alone to the some selected respondents so that they can express their views without any hesitation .Being the insider, in some cases I had the well experience and ideas of the local realities. So it also helped me for the validation of the information.

#### **4.10. Data Analysis:**

Data analysis is an important task in research. Especially I collected qualitative data so I needed more to focus on the way to analysis of such data. I normally use descriptive way to analyze data. But the quantitative data are also presented in tables and charts. Some statistical tools were also used while analyzing quantitative data.

According to Dey (1993) the core of qualitative data analysis is the description of data, the classification of data, and seeing how concepts are interconnected (in Kitchin and Tate, 2000: 230). After getting information by the respondent I wrote it down in my field diary. While analyzing data I used that information. I classified information according to their characteristics and then analyze it. I also tried to see different concepts and their interconnectedness. I analyze them according to the relevance of the data in different places.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. Introduction to field area

#### 5.1. Background:

The study area is Dang district of Mid- Western part of Nepal. It extends between 82° 02' east to 82°05' east longitude and 27°36' north to 28°2' north latitude. Its elevation extends between 213m to 2048m height from sea level. It falls in the inner-Tarai region according to ecological belts of Nepal. This district has border with India in south. But due to the Dunduwa range of Churiya part in the south there is not well roads to join India. So, people of this district go to India through other nearby districts which had well road connection with India.

Physically, Dang district has two bigger valleys (i.e. Dang and Deukhuri) and a small valley (i.e. Phulbari). The Dang valley surrounded by Mahabharat range in north and Churiya range in south whereas Deukhuri valley surrounded by Churiya range in all side. The Phulbari is a small valley is in the eastern south part of dang valley. It is surrounded by Churiya range. Total area of Dang district is 2955sqkm. (CBS, 2007).

My study VDC, Gobardiha VDC, in the south-east part of Deukhuri valley. It is surrounded by Kapilvastu in east, Shisahaniya VDC in north, Gangaparaspur VDC in west and border of India in south. In the northern part of this VDC Rapti river lies. Though Rapti River follows towards the north of this VDC, there is no facility of irrigation due to lack of government effort.

#### 5.2. Physical characteristics:

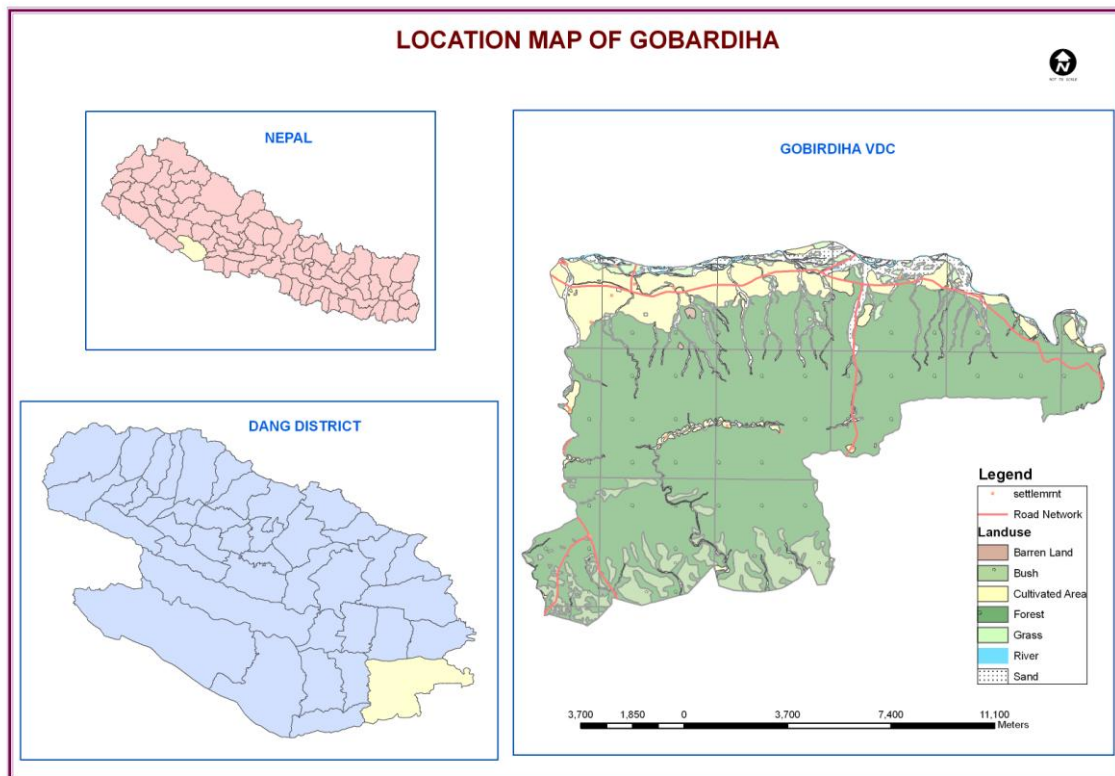
Deukhuri valley is made of with alluvial soil of Rapti River. It is surrounded by Churiya range in all side. The Churiya range has divided in two parts in dang. The southern part of Churiya range at dang district is known as Dunduwa range. Deukhuri valley lies between 213 to 700Masl.

Rapti River flows in Dekhuri valley, which is originated from Pyuthan district in the mid hills.

Deukhuri valley has sub-tropical climate. Since Dang is an administrative region and it's headquarter lies in the Dang valley, we can get weather information only of Dang valley. It is difficult to get weather information of Deukhuri valley. But in average it has maximum 35°C to minimum 05°C temperature and 1610mm<sup>5</sup> rain fall per year.

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<sup>5</sup> Source: Department of hydrology and metrology Nepal government. The data is taken from Koilabas, a nearest station (10 kms west) from the study area.



**Map 5.1: Location map of study area.**

Deukhuri valley is divided in two parts by Rapti River, the northern part and southern part. The east west highway of country goes through the northern part of the valley. It has not facility of blacktopped road. It is about 35km distance from the Ghorahi (i.e. administration centre of Dang district). The Gobardiha VDC extends from east to west.

### **5.3. Social characteristics:**

#### **i) Population:**

Gobardiha VDC has a population of 13436 people. It consists of 6666 males and 6770 females (CBS, 2001). Most of the people of this VDC are *Tharu* but other casts and ethnic group people also live there. The Deukhuri valley was inhabited by *Tharu* since past. They had their own way of farming practice: shifting cultivation (Gurung, 2002: 339). Mainly after resettlement program (in 1950s), which was launched after malaria eradication, many hill natives from the adjoining district Pyuthan, Salyan, Arghakhanchi came here and settled down. The migration of hill natives to this place can be observed until today.

ii) Caste and ethnicity:

In Nepal power was strengthened by interlinking it with the Hindu caste system. It classified all groups as distinct castes within the broad framework of the Hindu system of the four *varnas* based on concepts of ritual purity and pollution. The priestly Brahmins were at the top with the Kshatriya (kings and warriors) just beneath them; next came the Vaishya (merchants) and the Sudra (peasants and laborers). Beneath everyone were occupational groups, considered 'untouchable' or *achut* who now call themselves the *Dalits* (Bennett, 2005:6). Hence, caste group means the group of people of same class according to Hindu caste hierarchy system. An ethnic group is a group of people whose members identify with each other, through a common heritage that is real or assumed- sharing cultural characteristics (Banks, 1996:151). In common Nepali speaking, the ethnic group means those who do not fall under Hindu caste system and indigenous people who lived here since ancient time. For the analyses purpose I divide Hindu cast only in two groups namely: high caste hill native and low caste hill natives whereas Tharu are taken separate ethnic group and other ethnic group (like except *Tharu*) are grouped into other.

**Table 5.1: Caste/ Ethnic composition of Gobardiha VDC**

Cast/Ethnic groups	Number of people	Percent
Tharu	6312	47.0
High caste hill natives	1969	14.7
Low caste hill natives	3240	24.1
Other	1915	14.3
Total	13436	100.0

Source: CBS, 2001

The main caste of this VDC is *Tharu*. But other hill native people are also found in this area. Other cast like Brahmin, Chettri, Magar, Kumal, Kami, Sarki, Sunar also live in this VDC. In this VDC we can find another ethnic minority group, *Yadav* too. But the status of *Yadav* is high or they had good access to land because they are able to buy land from the *Jamindars*.

iii) Religion:

The *Tharu* people believe in Hinduism. Some of the *Tharu* also believe in Christianity. They celebrate *Dashain* and *Tihar* as biggest festival. Beside this *Maghi* is the special festival of *Tharu*, this festival is celebrated by them as New Year of agriculture practice. This festival is celebrated in the first week of the month *Magh*. In this month there is verbal contract made

between peasant and landlord about sharecropping. During this month both landlord and peasant can change each other and search new client.

#### **5.4. Economic characteristics:**

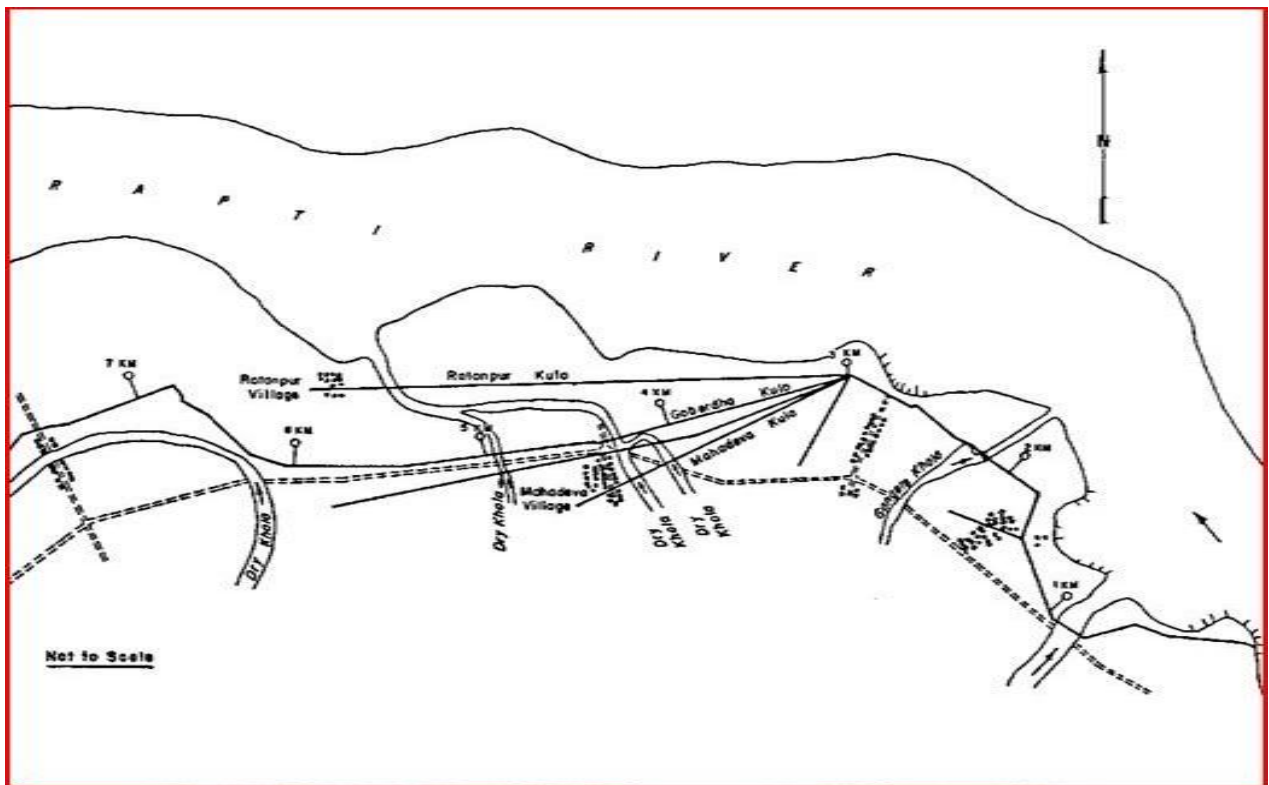
Agriculture is the main occupation of the people. Besides their other activities all household members were engaged in cereal crop and cash crop production to meet their demand. Most of the peasants have to rely on the proportion they get by the lands. The cultivation of any kinds of crops was decided by the landlords. The main cereal crops are rice, wheat and maize. The cash crops are lentil and beans (soya bean, pigeon pea, black gram). Mustard and rapeseed are grown for household use as well as for cash.

Livestock rearing is also common feature of this area. They kept cow, ox, buffalo, and chickens. The main aim of these livestock is for agricultural use (eg. Ox and bull for plough field). We can say agriculture practice cannot be complimented without animal. Moreover some livestock are kept for meat or for cash. For example cows are reared to sell milk and chicken to sell them in local market.

#### **5.5. Infrastructure:**

Though Mahendra Highway passes through the ward no one of this VDC and goes towards the northern part of Deukhuri valley, lacks good road network. In the southern part of the valley, there is *Hulaki* (small graveled) road that goes towards east-west. This road joined with east-west highway in the east at Kalakate and ends towards the end of the southern part of the Deukhuri valley and joined Sikta in Banke. This road goes along with each wards of the Gobardiha VDC. This is the main means of transportation. There is no good facility of market centre in this VDC. People have to go either Lamahi, which lies 13km north-west far from the VDC or Chandrauta, which lies 45km east from the VDC as the market centre. So it is difficult for people to sell their products.

Irrigation system of this area is also not good now. In the past there was facility of irrigation system to the *Khet* fields that are near by the river. People used to irrigate their field by the water of the river. This irrigation canal was called *Badkapath* irrigation system. This *Badkapath* was managed by local people since past. In 2036B.S. (1979 A.D.) government of Nepal took some initiation to manage it well by making good dam. Then it was in operation since 2039 BS (1982 A. D.). The figure of this irrigation system is given below:



**Map 5.2: Irrigational Cannal (Pradhan, 1989)**

But now due to the expansion of Rapti River's towards south area, the origin place of this irrigation system is damaged in 1990. So now people have to totally depend on the rain water and the water from stream. Now a day, the *Khet* where people used to grow rice with irrigation facility turns into *Bari*. They produce maize in this field. So it is very important to have irrigation facility their for increase productivity. Repairment of this irrigation system has been planned in the government budget of 2008-09.



## CHAPTER SIX

### *6. Impact of sharecropping on Farming system*

#### **6.1. Introduction:**

Turner and Brush (1987:3) defined farming system approach as a holistic approach where any level of unit engaged in agricultural production and the farming system approach describes the unit and explores its characteristics in relations with other units. A single farm consists of several components of land, labor, livestock, technology, market and institutions and various types of relations among them. The farming system of study area mainly depends on land, labor and livestock. Low level of technological input characterizes Nepalese agriculture (Chapagain, 2003). Even now people use 'paleotechnic' (Brush & Turner, 1987) agriculture. Though surplus production of the field are sold in local market, there is no real market oriented farming practices with different cash crops. The local level formal and informal institutions exist in the farming system. Farming system comprises of several sub system: human, environmental and genetic. The social science concentrates with human sub system (Turner and Brush, 1987:13). Analyzing the farming system of the study area I have focused mainly on human subsystems. The human aspect of farming system mobilizes the components of farm in different ways that are custom and rules, institutions, population and technology (Ibid). I analyze how people of my study area mobilize these components.

#### **6.2. Household:**

In Nepal the household is the main unit for agriculture, since the house hold head (especially man) has the property rights to the land. A household is a group of persons who live in the same house and make common arrangements for food and other requirements of daily living. Definitions of 'household' vary but they all refer to social groupings where a group of people share a same domestic activities like: sleeping in the same house, having meals together and sharing in a common domestic economy and household budget (Crow and Allan, 2001, Tiwari Pandey, UR, Niehof, & Price, 2007). More than one household may live in a single house. Generally a household or a family comprises the father, mother, sons and unmarried daughters. A household can be defined as "a co-residential unit, usually family-based in some way, which takes care of resource management and primary needs of its members" (Rudie, 1995:228). In the study area also this definition of household on family base is appropriate. The joint families where grandfather, grandmother, uncle, aunt and cousin live together and share common

resource also come under a household. Especially a household member means all the family members who live together, use same kitchen and share for the same household budget. The family members, who live on the one household, can be used as the agriculture labor. In most of the families they need more household member as a free agriculture labor. All members of the household are free labor for the particular household they belong to. *Tharu* are mainly dependent on agriculture so they have large family system. On the other hand the other people or the landlords had small family system compared to *Tharu* or the peasants.

### 6.3. Division of labor:

In traditional agriculture, there is a general tendency of age and sex wise division of labor. Especially gender differences in farming practices can be seen in the study area. Men have the main task of ploughing field whereas the women have the main tasks of planting, collecting and storing of production. Women are also responsible for inner household chores such as cooking, washing clothes, childcare and bringing drinking water.

Gender division of labor is also found in livestock rearing. Men collect fodder from farm trees whereas women cut the bushes and grasses from forest. For animal grazing, men were involved in buffalo and ox grazing whereas women and children are involved in goat, cow grazing. Women also go to the forest with livestock to graze them. The general division of labor according to sex in different crop practice is tabled below.

**Table 6.1: Gender labor division**

Crops	Men	Women
Paddy	Ploughing, seeding, Harvesting, Weeding, threshing	Transplanting, weeding, Harvesting, winnowing and storing.
Maize	Ploughing, seeding, weeding, harvesting, threshing	Seeding, weeding, harvesting, threshing, storing
Wheat	Ploughing, seeding, harvesting, threshing	weeding, harvesting, winnowing, storing
Mustard	Ploughing, Weeding, seeding, harvesting, threshing,	weeding, winnowing, storing,
Lentil	Ploughing, seeding, harvesting, threshing,	Harvesting, weeding, winnowing, storing
Rapeseed	Ploughing, seeding, harvesting, threshing,	Harvesting, weeding, winnowing, storing



**Photo 6.1: Women transplant paddy**



**Photo 6.2: Men plough the field.**

There is also age wise division of agricultural activities. Person below 15 or children generally goes for cattle grazing and adult member of the family engaged in field such as ploughing, transplanting paddy.

This kind of gender division of work affects in the sharecropping to access to land. Less male member of any household do not get land for sharecropping as well as if any families have not adult members do not easily get land for sharecropping.

#### **6.4. Land classification:**

Generally land of Nepal is divided into five different categories: *Khet*, *Bari*, *Pakho*, *Gharbari*, and *Jungle*. Where *Khet* means irrigated land, *Bari* non irrigated land, *Pakho* mean land with gentle slope, *Gharbari* means kitchen garden and *Jungle* means forest. Formally, on the basis of the quality of the land Nepal government has divided these land into different categories namely: *Abal*, *Doyem*, *Sim*, *Chahar*. *Abal* means well and irrigated land having high production; *Doyem* means non irrigate but high production, *Sim* mean non-irrigated land and low productive land; *Chahar* mean waste land.

Local people of study area have also classified the land according to its quality and production. They classified land in their own experience. ***Khet***, in their classification, is sub divided into different category such as: *Jabdi* (irrigated land with some kinds of water content); *Gautariya* ( irrigated land best for wheat production); *Ganar* (irrigated land with have good well connection with cannel); *Dabar* ( land but lack of connection with cannel); *Baluwa* (soil mostly consist of sand); *Pathriya* ( soil with sand and garvel). ***Bari*** is sub divided in the following ways: *Dihwa* (good land with high humus); *Dadainya* (land with some slope); *Dumna* (small hill/hump).

Most of the productive land is used by landlords as own cultivation. The lands, near by the house is cared by landlords. Moreover the lands in that are classified as *Gautaria* and *Jabdi* are mostly cultivated by the landlords. The unpaid labors (Begari in local term) are used to cultivate these lands. In the case of agriculture, a monitoring has a greater impact. The labor wants to minimize his labor. And the landlord wants to minimize in input (land). The minimizing of input by landlord implies that, the landlord cultivates the good quality land and lease-out the poor quality land (Sharma, 1984:15).

### **6.5. Land tenure system:**

The land tenure system that exists in this VDC is mostly own cultivation and some people rent out land for sharecropping as well. Large proportions of people in this village are small land holders. This small holding allows them some spare time for engaging themselves in wage labor. Some rich people and others, who are engaged in governmental sector job, can't spend time for cropping and give their land to peasants for sharecropping. The land tenure system and sharecropping is discussed well in chapter seven.

Till now, some of the lands that are under contested ownership (ownership of parts of land by both landlord and the tenant) are cultivated by the tenants. There are differences in distribution of the production on such lands. In some area the main cereal crop of summer season (especially rice and maize) production is divided in one third basis between landlords and the winter crops are divided equally. In some places the summer production is taken by the farmers only whereas winter crops are divided in one third basis. In some area crops of all season is taken by the farmers. Especially, the Maoist back force helped tenants to take away all the crops of all seasons in legally tenanted (*Mohi*) lands.

### **6.6. Cropping system:**

The cropping system of this area is almost monoculture. Most of the major crops (paddy, maize, wheat) are produced singly in the farm. In the border of the field, during paddy season peasants crop black gram. Especially in some field, near by house, peasant crop common bean (*Simi* in local term) and cucumber in the maize field. But other area or in larger part there is system of monoculture. In winter we can see some kind of mix cultivation. In the *Khet*, where lentil is main crop, they cultivate rapeseed as well. In the *Bari* where mustard is the main crop, peasant cultivate pea. These cropping systems are not changed even under the practice of sharecropping system. In winter, the cropping of lentil instead of wheat in the *Khet* is a substantial change.

The cropping pattern of this area is usually two crops in a year. The general sequence is that first rice is grown and the wheat or lentil follows the next cultivation on *Khet*. In *Bari*, the major crop maize followed by mustard or lentil. The cropping pattern of summer crops in this area has not changed due the sharecropping system compared to *Kamaiya* system. But in winter, the production of wheat in greater amount replaced by the lentil. This is due to the high demand of lentil in local market and development of market access.



**Photo 6.3: Cultivating rice in *Khet* and maize in *Bari*.**

#### **6.7. Major crops:**

**Paddy** is the main staple crop of this area. This is cultivated in *khet* (irrigated field). Generally this plantation starts during the monsoon season. Paddy is sown during May. This is again transplanted during mid- June. Then during July August and September it is weeded by farmers. They especially care it with grasses and pest. In October, paddy is harvested. **Maize** is another major crop and staple food. This is cultivated in *Bari* (non-irrigated field). This is sown during March/April. It is cared against grasses and pest when it is small. Especially June/ July people care it through grasses. It is harvested during September. **Wheat**: It is another major staple crop. It is sown in *Khet* during winter. With wheat people make *Roti* (a kind of bread) and have food mostly in the evening. While seeding wheat people also seeds other crops like lentil, peanuts with wheat in the same field.

#### **6.8. Cash crops:**

**Mustard** is the most important oil seed. It is planted in *Bari* during winter. People plant it for household oil consumption. Surplus production of mustard is sold in local market. So this is possible only with landlords having relatively bigger landholding. But for peasants it is not possible to sell it. Some peasants are just able to produce for their household needs. But most of the peasants buy oil from the market. **Lentil** is also other important crop. People use it as

legume. They use it with their food as *Dal* (soup). But it is also a cash crop. Especially it is produced especially in *Khet* having little or no irrigation facility. It is sown during winter. **Soya Bean** is another important cash crop. It is planted in summer while transplanting rice. It is planted in the borders of the field. It is harvested with rice during October. **Rapeseed** is another important cash crop as well as oil seed. It is cropped in those fields where there is not good water facility.

#### **6.9. Livestock rearing:**

Livestock rearing is another important feature of subsistence agriculture. People keep cow, ox, buffalo, bull, goat, pig and hens. The purpose of keeping them is to use the animal product and labor for agriculture. Before abolition of *Kamaiya* system, large number of cows and oxen, buffalos, bulls were kept by the landlords. They cultivate their land by themselves so they keep it. Now, the number of cattle and buffalos is decreased in landlords' house. They keep one or two cows and buffalo just for dairy products for household consumption.

The number of livestock has increased in the peasants' house. Now, peasants have sufficient time to take care of their livestock. In past they had to work for the landlord for the whole day. All family members worked as *kamaiya* or *Kamalahari* (female worker) in landlords' house for food. But now all are free and have time enough for diversifying their livelihood strategy. This has helped them to keep livestock and have good income.

#### **6.10. Crop calendar:**

Especially, in this area crops are planted twice in a year. During summer rice is the main crop in *khet* and maize in *bari*. Moreover people plant soybean on the terrace margin of *khet* during summer. During winter wheat is the main crop in *khet* and mustard is the main crop in *bari*. In the *khet* that is not irrigated well, people plant lentil or other types of legume.

There is not much difference in this crop calendar due to the sharecropping system. One most obvious thing that may affect in crop calendar is late rainfall. Almost all agriculture practice in this area is depended on monsoon rainfall. So if monsoon is delayed there will be difference in crop calendar accordingly.

**Table 6.2: Major crops calendar**

S. N.	Main crops/ activities	<i>Bai</i> Apr /May	<i>Jes</i> May /Jun	<i>Aa</i> Jun/ Jul	<i>Sra</i> Jul/ Aug	<i>Bha</i> Aug/ Sep	<i>Ash</i> Sep/ Oct	<i>Kar</i> Oct/ Nov	<i>Man</i> Nov/ Dec	<i>Pou</i> Dec/ Jan	<i>Mag</i> Jan/ Feb	<i>Pha</i> Feb/ Mar	<i>Cha</i> Mar/ Apr
1.	Paddy												
	Seeding		—										
	Transplanting			—									
	Weeding					—							
	Harvesting						—						
	Threshing							—					
2.	Maize												
	Sowing	—											
	Weeding		—										
	Harvesting					—							
3.	Wheat												
	Sowing							—					
	Harvesting											—	
4.	Mustard												
	Sowing							—					
	Weeding								—				
	Harvesting									—			
	Threshing										—		
5.	Lentil												
	Sowing							—					
	Harvesting									—			
	Threshing										—	—	

Note: Words in italic represents first words of the months according to Nepali calendar.

Some peasants have relatively larger landholding that, in some cases, gives them about six months food self sufficiency. These peasants give first priority to transplant the paddy seeding in their own field first. This some times delays the transplantation in the sharecropped field when there is unpredictable monsoon rainfall.

### 6.11. Modern technology:

There is general tendency that people use modern technology in own cultivated land rather than in sharecropped land. People use tractor to plough field. But there is lack of use of threshers.

Use of tractors/threshers in sharecropped land is low because there is agreement for total labor input by the farmer. While ploughing field by tractors, the cost must be paid by the tenants. So if tenant use it, they pay for it. Since the peasants have available labor and animals, they usually use human labor to plough field. Some landlords are now using tractor in their fields. When a landlord uses tractor he does not let his land for sharecropping. The general concept of local people is that the use of modern technology is not enough to produce more. For example the tractor used for plough does not plough field as properly as a traditional plough does. So there is lack of using modern technology.

Generally, in the summer season people use high yielding rice like *Mansuli*, *Bindeshori*, and *Kamala* in the sharecropped land. They do not use any hybrid seeds of maize. In winter people crop local wheat, lentil and mustards. This shows that people do not use any kind of modern seeds in the sharecropped land. The use of insecticide is also low to the sharecropped land. It is used only if the crop is in danger of insects.

#### **6.12. Interference of landlord in decision making:**

In some types of tenancy – notably sharecropping- the landlord rather than tenant may decide what is grown and how it is grown (Grigg, 1995:170). In the study area, the decision about planting different kinds of crop is in general done by the discussion of both parties. Due to the uncertainty of rainfall and the dependence of agriculture in monsoon rain, the type of rice to plant is an important issue. The good quality rice needs timely rain and timely plantation. So, according to rainfall intensity they make decision on specific crop is to be planted. If there is adequate rainfall, they plant *Munsuli* (rice which have small seeds and high productivity) or high yielding rice. And, if there is less rainfall they plant local rice that does not need more rain fall. During such uncertainty the decision is made by both.

Generally, people crop rice in the field during summer because rice is the main staple food of the area. Moreover the main cause of the peasants for the share cropping is to get food crops so they cultivate rice for food. The main food item in Nepal is rice, *Dal* and vegetable. The landlords normally have sufficient amount of household food from rainy crops. The land lord wills to produce rice in summer because they can sell it in local market and the price and the production of rice is well.

In winter, many peasants want to grow wheat instead of lentil. Peasants' first priority is to secure food for family. If they grow wheat, it can be grown in more amounts and can be used as staple crop for home. Lentil is used as curry for food and it will be enough in fewer amounts. Though they can earn money from lentil by selling it, they do not buy food from that money. If they buy, they will buy rice from the local market, which is also expensive. There is general



concept of Nepali society against buying food. If a person buys food then he is regarded as poor. The term “*Besaune*” (buying food) has negative connotation. According to Grigg (1995:81) many farmers in developing countries purchase few input and sell little off the farm: their main aim is to provide food for their family. So in the subsistence agriculture system of the study area the farmers are also interested to grow more staple food rather than cash crops.

Some landlords, who are totally depended on agriculture and have good knowledge of it, make decision by themselves. The decision made by the landlords some times affects peasants’ desire. For example; during the winter the peasants wants to crop more wheat than lentil but the landlords force them to cultivate lentil. In the sharecropping system the decision about cropping depends on landlords’ decision. Most of the peasants say that the decision about cropping is taken by the landlords. But in some cases, particularly if landlord is absent or do not live in village during cropping time, if landlords have not basic ideas about agriculture, then the decision is made by sharecropper. Here, the landlords who do not have ideas of agriculture means those who’s parents recently died or are absent in village due to Maoist movements. In the case when landlords live out side from the village and involve in business and services, the decision is totally made by the peasants.

**A farmer, 64 years old**, has been sharecropping with the same landlord for last 15 years, wants to grow wheat but the landlord wants to grow lentil instead of wheat. Though lentil is cash crop, it is difficult to sell due to the lack of access to the market. They have to depend on local agents who can easily cheat them. Since they do not have enough lentils to sell it in nearby market by using tractor or truck, they sell it in local market or to agents in cheap rate. Moreover, the money that is earned from lentil may be spent in other things. While wheat produced in more amount and it is a good food crop.

### **6.13. Impacts of sharecropping in peasants’ livelihood:**

Before 2000, most of the peasants worked as bonded labor in the landlords’ house with minimum wage. At that time they were not able to fulfill household food needs. But now, they are able to fulfill households’ food needs. They even sell surplus production in local market. They sell especially cash crops like lentil, mustard and soybean. This helps them to spend money for other needs. They say in past they had to spent all the day in landlord’s or boss’s house but now they spent time in field during peak season and can go nearby areas for casual labor after finishing their work in field. The peasants consider the abolition of bonded labor (*Kamaiya*)

system to have brought some opportunities (to work as casual labor in other areas) for their livelihood, but still there is uncertainty regarding the acquisition of land.

Since sharecropping system helps to feed their family and provide time to go other places for wage labor it has helped them to reduce poverty. The land rent system also an opportunity for poor to have land ownership. Land renting is a stage of progress of peasant towards the land ownership (De Janvry, Platteau, Gordillo, & Sadoulet, 2001:14). In the study area some peasant who had sharecropped land since long time are able to get some land ownership through the legal provision of Tenancy (*Mohi*) system. This is described in chapter eight. Some peasants are able to buy land that they needs.

**A tenant of 47 years old** usually worked as bonded labor in landlord's house for 10 years before 2000. Then he sharecropped land with the same landlords. He then was able to fulfill his family needs. He and his family earn some money through livestock rearing and wage labor. This year they bought some land with that money. He added that he would not sharecrop land next year since he had enough land to his family. He said if he had not got land for sharecropping after eradication of bonded labor, it would have been very difficult for him to fulfill his family food needs in such shock. But sharecropping has changed his situation.

This case study also shows that peasants can also have enough time to keep livestock. Now they don't have to spend all time in another person's house. This way sharecropping system helps them to improve their living standard than before.

#### **6.14. Land tenure security:**

The most obvious problem of sharecropping system is its uncertainty. Owing to the fear of landlords' eviction of land for the next year, the peasants are not interested to care about soil characteristics and any inputs. Though the Land Act 1964 explained that the landlord can not give up a tenant without any specific reason, the landlords change the tenants any time they want.

**A 44 years old peasant**, two years ago, had an experience of being a victim of uncertainty. He received land from a landlord. That land was very hard to plough since it was abandoned for some years. Then with hard work he made it arable. But after two years the landlord gave this land to another person. He says that he spent more time to plough this land to make arable but another person got it without hard work.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### 7. Land management system and sharecropping

#### 7.1. Land tenancy:

As discussed earlier, since most of the farmers are holding a small size of land in this area, they cultivate their land themselves. But some people, who have abundant land, rent out their land for sharecropping. Moreover, those who can't spend time in agriculture or have involved/got job in different services have rented out their land to the peasant. Land management system can be grouped into two types according to the local practice of the area, namely: own cultivation and tenant cultivation. The following table shows the number of households (HH) of each ward of the VDC and the different tenants. Similarly the number of landlords and the landless people are also given in the following table.

**Table 7.1: Number of households by land tenancy.**

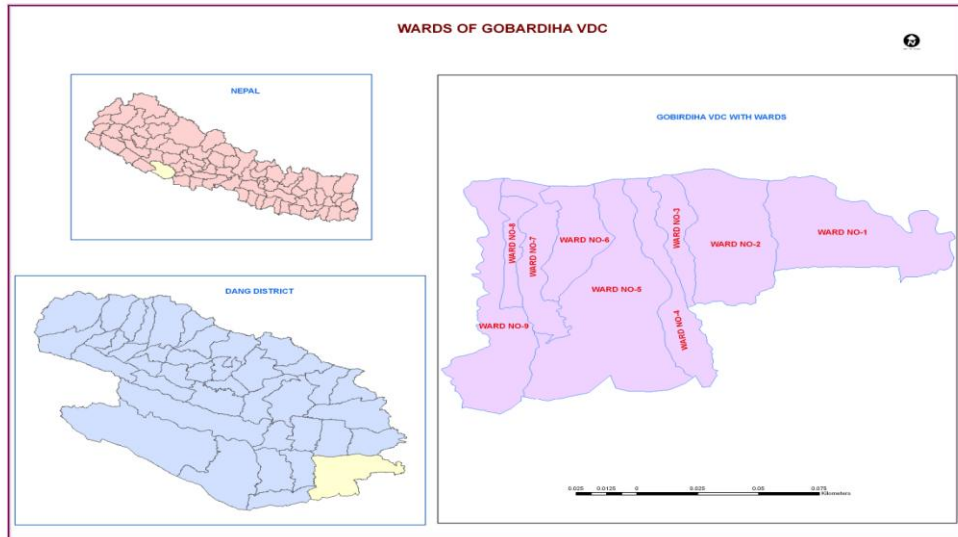
Ward No	No of Landlords HH	No of Tenants HH	No of Landless HH	No of Own Cultivators HH	Total HH
1	5(1.0)	6(1.2)	1(0.2)	482(97.5)	494
2	6(1.8)	10(3.1)	0	308(95.0)	324
3	16(10.0)	22(13.7)	0	122(76.2)	160
4	28(10.3)	37(13.6)	1(0.3)	206(75.7)	272
5	32(10.3)	42(13.5)	0	237(76.2)	311
6	35(11.9)	41(13.9)	0	218(74.1)	294
7	32(15.7)	38(18.7)	2(0.1)	131(64.5)	203
8	37(12.4)	44(14.8)	1(0.3)	215(72.4)	297
9	24(7.6)	30(9.5)	0	259(82.7)	313
TOTAL	215(8.1)	270(10.1)	5(0.2)	2178(81.6)	2668

Figure within parenthesis presents percentage.

Source: VDC Profile and Field survey, 2009

Around 80% farmers cultivate their land by themselves whereas only 8 percent of people rent out their land for sharecropping (Table 6.1). This is because most people have small portion of the land. Though less people are engaged in sharecropping the landlords have more percent of the

land on their ownership in the VDC. In ward one and two we can see there is less number of land tenancy of the sharecropping type. These wards lie in the eastern side of the VDC. The Deukhuri valley is narrow in east and its breadth increases in the west. There is lack of good agricultural land in the east part of the Valley because of the extensive Churiya range (Siwalik Hills) which consists of young, unconsolidated and highly eroded sediments.



**Map 7.1: Wards of Gobardiha VDC**

In these wards the proportion of hill natives is high and they cultivate their land in *Parma* (labor exchange system within a village) system. But as we go in the west the width of the VDC and the agricultural land increases as well. So there are large number sharecroppers in the west.

Land of *Guthi* or communal land is tenanted in **fixed rent**. The local schools' (local institutions) lands are managed in fixed rent where tenants pay Rs 12,000<sup>6</sup> per hectare per year to the cultivable or productive land and pay Rs. 8,000 per year per hectare for unproductive land.

Previously, some land of other institutions (Mahendra Sanskrit University and Shiva temple of Chaughera) was managed differently. The Land of Mahendra Sanskrit University was managed by the third person. A local person contracted the land in fixed rent from university. He paid Rs10 thousand per hectare per year. To manage this land, he let this land for the peasants for sharecropping. In past up to 1995, the peasant and the local contractor share production of the land equally (50/50). During the Maoist movement 1995-2002, the production of the land was

<sup>6</sup> Rs mean Nepali Rupees. Generally 1\$ (USD) =Rs 71, in 2010.

distributed in one third, peasants took two part whereas the contractor just get one part of the production. Now, the land was registered as legal tenant (*Mohi*) by the local peasant and they do not give any amount of production to the both the contractor and the university. The local contractor left his contract and all the production is used by the peasant. There is a conflict between local peasant and the university authorities. But due to the political force of the Maoist the university authorities are not able to take any action against it. The case is in court for decision.

The land of Chaughera Temple was managed by peasant directly and they used to send the half production of the land to the temple. This was the practice up to 1995. But later on , peasant keep two part and sent just one part mean ratio of (2/3) to peasant and (1/3) to temple. After 2002 this land was registered as tenant (*Mohi*) and peasant stopped paying any proportion of the production. Around 2004, the temple sold all its land in this area at a cheap price to the peasant who cropped this land and had tenancy right.

## 7.2. Land holding size:

It is obvious that the landholding size of peasants and the landlords differs. Since landlords have more land and relatively less people or labor supply from their families; they have rented out lands for sharecropping. Following table shows the land holding size of selected peasants and landlords for the study.

**Table 7.2: Land holding size of respondents in 2009**

Size of holding	No. of peasants	No. of landlords
Landless	4 (8.7)	0 (0)
under 0.1 ha	14 (30.4)	0 (0)
0.1 to under 0.5ha	25 (54.4)	0 (0)
0.5ha to under 1ha	3 (6.5)	2 (7.4)
1ha to under 5ha	0 (0)	16 (59.3)
5ha and under 10 ha	0 (0)	7 (25.9)
10ha and more	0 (0)	2 (7.4)
Total	46 (100)	27 (100)

Note: Figures within parenthesis represent percentage.

Almost all peasants have land under 1 ha whereas almost landlords have land more than 1 ha. Especially those people who are employed or work out side from district or country give their small land for sharecropping because they live out side almost all time. The average land holding size of landlords is 1ha to 5ha. It is obvious that larger number of landlords exercise subsistence farming. They can not use high technology for commercial agriculture.

### 7.3. Distribution of landlord and tenant:

It is common for a landlord to rent out land to several tenants where as a tenant also can have several landlords. There is general tendency of landlords to rent out land to the more than a single peasant so that the land may undergo proper use and the peasant will be able to produce more. Similarly, a peasant with abundant labor supply can rent in land from several landlords to use its labor properly. The following tables show the distribution of peasant and landlords for each peasant and landlord households (HH).

**Table 7.3: Distribution of landlords to a peasant (HH)**

No of landlords to a single Peasant's HH	No of peasants	Percent
1	32	69.6
2	10	21.7
3	4	8.7
Total	46	100.0

**Table 7.4: Distribution of peasants to a landlord (HH)**

No of peasants to a single landlord's (HH)	No of Landlords	Percent
1	11	40.7
2	7	25.9
3	3	11.1
4	5	18.5
5	1	3.7
Total	27	100.0

Table 7.3 and 7.4 demonstrate that comparatively landlords have more peasants to rent out the lands.

#### **7.4. Sharecropping system:**

Land tenancy can be grouped into three: own cultivation, fixed rent and share cropping. In own cultivation the land and labor both are used by the land owner. In fixed rent land owner give land to the peasant in fixed price and tenant is free to cultivate any things he wants. In share cropping system the landlord provides land and the farmer provides labor. Where, a landowner allows a tenant to use the land in return for a share of the crop produced on the land (e.g., 50% of the crop). In sharecropping system the “landowner leases out his land for at least one full production cycle and the net harvest is shared between the tenant and the landowner on some legally stipulated basis” (Bhaduri ,1973:121). Sharecropping is the common agricultural practice prevalent in Gobardiha; however, the general tendency of the contract is not based on fixed pricing. Only in the case of *Guthi* land there is system of fixed rent. For example in *Kalakate* and *Gobardiha*, people cultivate the school lands at a fixed rent. The contract with an individual landlord is always in sharecrop. There are certain rules and regulations for the contract which is discussed below.

##### **7.4.1 Share of output:**

Previously, the agricultural production was divided as 2/3 proportion to the land lord and 1/3 proportion to the peasant. As the Land Act 1964, in article 33, explains that the landlord is not allowed to take more than half of the total agriculture production (Land Act, 1964). Then the out put used to be shared equally. Now, the most common form of agreement found in the sharecropping in the study area is the equal share of annual agricultural production. Here, the divide is not only count to grain products but also to the agricultural by products. In some cases where a landlord do not have animal any more, all agricultural byproduct is used by the peasant. However, during the time when Maoist rebellion was at its heyday, in some wards, people have experienced the out put to be shared on one third bases, where land lord got 33.3% and the peasant got 66.6% of the out put. After the Maoist rebellion ceased to exist, the same system of equal share of the production restored. It is obvious that all farmers are in favor of one third divide and landlords are against it.

##### **7.4.2 Share of input:**

Apart from all the labor (human and animal) required for crop production, which is provided solely by the sharecroppers; there are no fixed rules of who bears how much of other inputs.

Smith (1937) and Marshall (1961) claim that share cropping is inefficient because the landlords do not provide any agricultural input except land and peasant do not provide other input except labor. While discussing about share of input, Bhaduri (1973) found that the landlords provides all input other than labor whereas Bray and Robertson (1980) found that the landowner provides land or there are pre arrangements of share of input cost. In the study area the landlords provide land. All labor input and the animal power is borne by the peasant. Any kind of labor needed from canal preparation, fallow field ploughing, harvesting to storing is farmers' response. But the shares of other agricultural inputs are differing. Generally there is equal share of seed. The use of manure is different. Somewhere the peasants use their cow dung in the field and some where the landlords. The use of cow dung (manure) depends on the how many animals are there with the any of the party. If one has more animals then s/he can use more manure in the field. If the peasant or the landlord have certain parts of land that they cultivate by themselves, then the priority to use manure is first given to these fields and then in the sharecropped land. The use of compost is not valued in monetary form is used by individual decision. But the use of chemical fertilizer that has monetary value is shared in equal basis. The pesticides used in the field are shared in the equal basis. A similar case was found by the Stern & Lanjouw (1998) in Palampur of India. They explained that the harvesting which is not mechanized and the cost of harvesting are fully borne by the tenant. But if the threshing is fully mechanized and the costs are divided equally between landlord and the tenant (Stern & Lanjouw, 1998:485). This clarifies those capital-intensive inputs are shared equally.

#### **7.4.3. Tenancy Duration:**

The agreement to use land for sharecropping is generally done during the *Maghi* festival. It is a local festival which falls in mid- January and celebrated as beginning of agriculture calendar. The whole month of *Magh* (Nepali calendar) is celebrated as the new agriculture year. In the second week of the *Maghi*, the landlord and the peasant make different agreements about the sharecropping. During this time both landlord and peasant can change contracts. Agreement on sharecropping once done in *Maghi*, binds at least for a year. To get land from landlords, peasants offer like meat, alcohol to landlords in *Maghi*. Though the contract is done for a year, a peasant can get a landlords land for more years. Generally the lands are given to the peasant in an average for five or six years. But In the field some where I found some landlords gave land to peasants for more than 30 years. The Land Act 1964 provides rights to the peasant to claim for the land ownership if they cultivate more years. This amendment has affected the time length for



the land contract. Mostly, landlords rent out land to those peasants through whom they feel safe or who will not claim for the land right according to law. Then the time length of contract depends with the relations of the landlord and peasant. In most cases peasants don't get lands for cropping for longer time.

Peasant can work harder to avoid the eviction in short duration. The longer contract duration could increase contractual efficiency by contributing to the long run earning potential of the land (Bhandari, 2007: 296). It is obvious that the longer the contract between landlord and peasant the higher the productivity. This is because the other inputs except labor were used highly in the land those were contracted regularly for long time. Such cases are found only when there is a good relation between the landlord and the peasant, where the peasants do not fear of eviction from the landlord as well as the landlord does not fear of peasants of tenancy claim.

#### **7.4.4 Choice of partner:**

Generally, the agreement for sharecropping is done between trusted partners. The choice of partner depend mostly the characteristics of the person. The landlord usually favor to those tenants who are honest, trustworthy, hardworking and resourceful. Hence resourceful tenants are those who are rich in terms of labor, animal, and agricultural tools. Tenants with good assets, experienced, hardworking have not any difficulty to find land for lease. Similarly, the landlords who have large landholding and are gentle, accommodating, trustworthy, can find many farmers to lease his land.

The previous year relation determines the length of contract. Generally *Tharu* landlords prefer to those who are of same clan, or in kinship relationship. The Hill caste landlords prefer to those who had worked in landlords as *Kamaiya* in past. The intensity of unpaid labor (that is offered by the tenant), availability of adult male members, are also another factor to choose a tenant. In contrast to this, farmer prefer to those landlords who have less adult male members. They say the male members are more argumentative.

#### **7.5. Sharecroppers and the causes of sharecropping:**

According to the table 6.5, almost all peasant and landlord are from active population group. Though the age above 60+ is regarded as non active population, many peasants (about 20%) were even engaged in sharecropping. They follow it because there are not enough sources for them to support their old age. The old age people are less movable than other. There is not the

local level opportunity for spending time and to earn living. While doing sharecropping the old peasants do not have to move away from village for any kind of labor. They can use their leisure time more optimally in village. They can also take care of their family. The old peasants have small piece of land and they need some animals to use that land. If they choose sharecropping they can use their animal as well as their time for cropping. They can get agriculture byproduct like straw through sharecropping, which is useful for their animal husbandry.

**Table 7.5: The age distribution**

Age group	No. of Peasants	Percentage	No. of Landlords	Percentage
25-30	0	0	3	11.11
30-35	5	10.87	1	3.70
35-40	8	17.39	3	11.11
40-45	3	6.52	2	7.41
45-50	8	17.39	3	11.11
50-55	6	13.04	5	18.52
55-60	7	15.22	8	29.63
60-65	7	15.22	1	3.70
65+	2	4.35	1	3.70
Total	46	100	27	100

There is accumulation of landlords' age group between 50 to 60 years of age. It is because the landlords are able to buy land from the *Mukhiya* after the Land Act 1964 which fixed the land ceiling. While buying land generally of same age group migrated from hills and buy lands. Additionally, there is general tendency that land ownership is transferred to the sons after the death of their parents. So there is less number of landlords of age groups below 40 with landownership.

The *Tharu* and low cast hill group are the sharecroppers. The table 7.6 reveals that the almost all about 83% peasant are *Tharus* where as about 15% low cast hill natives are the peasant. There are also significant no of *Tharu* landlords (i.e. 37%). The total no of *Tharu* in this VDC is high (i.e. 47%) so the number of *Tharu* landlord is also high. The total population of high cast hill natives of this VDC is about 15% but their status as landlord is high which shows that they are rich in terms of land.

Tharu are historically marginalized group of Tarai and lack with land ownership. Since their main activity is agriculture they follow sharecropping as their livelihood strategy. The low cast hill natives like *Kami* (black smith), *Sarki* (Leather maker) are marginal occupational cast group in hill and also marginalized in Tarai though they migrated here for searching better opportunities. Some *Kumals* (pot maker) are also sharecropping because their traditional occupation of making pots from mud is now replaced by metallic pots.

**Table 7.6: Cast/ethnic composition**

Ethnicity	No. of Peasants	Percentage	No of Landlords	Percentage
Tharu	38	82.6	10	37.0
High caste hill natives	1	2.2	13	48.1
Low caste hill natives	7	15.2	0	0
Other	0	0	4	14.8
Total	46	100.0	27	100

Family size in agrarian society is the most important. The family members of any house are the free labor for agriculture purpose. So the higher the family labor higher the availability of free labor for agriculture. Since landlords have less no of family compared to their land they let their land for sharecropping. The table 7.7 obviously explains that there is greater number of peasant family with high family size. *Tharu* people mostly live in the joint family system. There is high number of peasants with large family size since most of the peasants are *Tharu*. So it is easier for the *Tharu* peasants to have more family labors needed for the sharecropping.

**Table 7.7: Family size**

Family Size	No. of Peasant		No. of Landlord	
	Family	Percentage	Family	Percentage
1-5	2	4.35	3	11.11
5-10	31	67.39	20	74.07
10-15	11	23.91	3	11.11
15-20	2	4.35	1	3.70
Total	46	100	27	100

The average family size is between 5-10 people. Hence, the big family size and lack of sufficient land forces them to sharecrop. Though this family size is crucial in agriculture activity, in some cases the youths had gone to big cities for labor work. They do not help even to the household needs.

**A farmer of 35 years old said,** “Previously, all sons used to live together in same house with me. They helped for agricultural activities while they were small. Now after being young they had gone to the big cities for labor work. They are not giving me part of their earning whatever they earn by doing labor work. They spend their earning to fulfill their own interest. They are not contributing in any form for household and daily needs. In past, I used to rent and plough a bit large part of land but now due to lack of agricultural labors, I am not getting enough land for sharecropping.”

Education is considered as an important livelihood asset. Higher educational attainment offers good chance to get high level job and handsome salary. This also provides chances to divert from agricultural activities.

**Table 7.8: Literacy status**

Literacy Status	Literate				Illiterate
	Total	Primary	Secondary	Higher secondary	
No of Peasants	13 (28.3)	10 (21.7)	3 (6.5)	0	33 (71.7)
No of Landlords	23 (85.2)	4 (14.8)	11 (40.7)	8 (29.6)	4 (14.8)

This table 7.8 shows that, there is less number of peasants who can read and write but many landlords are literate and educated. Most of the sharecropper farmers are poor *Tharus*. There is saying among peasant *Tharus* that “*Pado likho koun kam halo joto mamomam*” means there is not immediate return after reading but ploughing field provides immediately at least rice to eat. It means the peasants first need is to have some kind of work to feed their family. Though some landlords are illiterate they are engaged in other activity like business.

Since few peasants are literate or do not have higher secondary or more educational status they lack the chances to get a well paid government job. They also lack chances to get job in city areas except as casual laborers. The landlords have more chances to get job than peasants, so that they can not give more time on agricultural activities. About 25% of landlords are engaged in service sectors. About 30% landlords are engaged in business activities. The landlords have

chances to higher education due to their good economic status. They have control over the land resources and earn money which in-turn enables them to invest in education.

The land peasant own is not sufficient for them to feed their family. The agriculture production that is grown in their field is not sufficient for meeting the year round need. They manage food by growing crops in sharecropping fields. It is also found that even if the peasants make money from wage labor out side, they spend it on alcohol, buying cloths instead of buying food items. They said if they had money then they may spend it in drinking alcohol or other items. But through sharecropping they get food crops which are necessary food items for daily living. The following table shows food availability of the peasants by months.

**Table 7.9: Food sufficiency from own field**

Food availability (in months)	No of peasants	Percent
Less than 3	20	43.4
Less than 6	24	52.2
Less than 9	1	2.2
Less than 12	1	2.2
Total	46	100.0

This table shows that peasants had not enough food production from their field to feed their family for the whole year. Since the peasants have less land they can not produce more to fulfill their family needs. In addition, *Tharu* use cereal grains (rice, wheat) to make alcohol (*Jand*), especially on religious ceremony, which is also a cause for lacking food for year. *Tharu* community has traditional practice of making alcohol from cereal grains which leads to their food insecurity (Gyawali & Ekasingh, 2006:295). In *Tharu* community people use *Jand* for any kind of traditional activities. They welcome a guest with *Jand*, which is a high respect to the guest. They worship their god with *Jand*.

There is lack of extensive commercial farming. So the peasants do not have chances to work intensively on commercial farming system. As Von Thunen (1966) said that as the distance from the market increases the market oriented crop production decreases and the people from far away of market generally grow food grains. The near by big market centre is approximately 35 Km far from the VDC. People generally sell some surplus grain production from their field into the small market (i.e. Lamahi, 13Kms far from the VDC). Another important factor for subsistence

farming system is lack of infrastructure in this area. There is not a good road in this area to go in market centre. There is not bridge and causeways in the local streams. When flood occurs in the rainy season the roads are damaged by the local streams and it is difficult to go anywhere. The lack of irrigation facility is another cause to rely on subsistence agriculture or local cropping pattern.

A peculiar form of land fragmentation has led to the practice of sharecropping. Inheritance system of parental property that is prevalent in Nepal is the major reason for the fragmentation of already small holdings of lands. In the study area, most of the landlords have different patches of land. Sporadic distribution of land patches is the result of Land Act of 1964 which fixed on land ceiling. It limited landholding to 15 hectare under a single ownership. This led to the big landowners to sell their land that exceeded the limitation. The most efficient strategy of sell was to keep in account the quality of land and divide the land for sell in such way that each type of land could be sold. The buyers were bound not to choose only good quality land but also had to compromise on all types. This resulted in the sporadic distribution of land. This distribution still persists under inheritance. However, this distribution created difficulty in taking care of all land patches which are spatially distributed in different parts. Hence, lending these lands which are difficult to husband for sharecropping is one of rational decisions of the landlords. Some of the landlords have land across the Rapti River in the north. It is difficult for them to cross the Rapti River and manage their land during the peak season of monsoon. Before the abolishment of *Kamaiya* system (in 2000), the lands that are far from the village, were given to the sharecropping.

Government of Nepal announced the abolition of bonded labor (*kamaiya*) in July, 2000. This government action has direct impact on sharecropping. In bonded labor system a landlord kept *Kamaiya* (Bonded labor) to take care of his farm. The term *Kamaiya* and *kamalahari*( female bonded labor) mean male and female labor respectively. This is formed by Tharu term *Kamaina*, which means to earn (Chhetri, 2005:32). The Tharu people, who historically had been cheated from other elite group for land ownership, became *Kamaiyas*. The operating mechanism of *Kamaiya* system further marginalized *Tharu* towards the vicious circle. Once they became *Kamaiya*, the land lord further marginalized them by labor, credit and land contract (Dhakal et. al., 2000. Krauskoff, 1999, Chhetri, 2005). In this system a labor had to work whole day in landlord's house. He was poorly paid by the landlords. Even the wife of the *Kamaiya* had to work as unpaid labor in the landlord's house during peak seasons. The landlords had chance to

cultivate their land by low payment to labor. But after eradication of bonded labor system the landlord have to spend for labor cost. They have to pay the peasant in daily wage basis. This result high cost for agriculture labor and they give land for the sharecropping. After abolition of *Kamaiya* system the peasants have more free labor at household level. So they practice sharecropping system that is only one livelihood option available in the local area and efficient use of family labor.

#### **7.6. Reverse sharecropping:**

Generally sharecropping system means such system where the person with enough land rents out his/her land to landless people for cultivation. But when a person with small landholding gives his land to more land holder, this case is known as ‘reverse sharecropping’ (Bellemare, 2009). In my field I also found a case of reverse sharecropping.

**A tenant of 35 years old** has 0.1 ha of land and has a small family. He is not able to keep livestock and husband farm land. He works as rickshaw puller in nearby market. So he has given his land to one of his relative who has more land than his for sharecropping. He said that he can earn money from labor work than working in the field.

#### **7.7. Sharecropping in local news paper:**

In this section I am presenting an article by a sharecropper in local weekly news paper named *Lauwa Agrasan*.<sup>7</sup>

##### **Where is the freedom for the sharecropper? (*khai adheruwanke mukti?*)**

Somu is sad since long days. He is worried for not getting land for sharecropping. Since his son has gone for higher education in district head quarter and his daughter get married, he has not sufficient family labor to work.

This problem is not only the problem of Somu. This is the problem of all sharecroppers like Somu. Nepal government has abolished the *Kamaiyas* in July 2000. But the *Kamaiyas* are not freed in real sense. Now, they are exploited as sharecropper as they were in *Kamaiya* system. Here, only the name changed, the *Kamaiyas* or the sharecroppers both are same. They get land from the landlords if they accept all the conditions that are proposed by the landlords. They have to make the landlord happy. In such way sharecropper has to plough some of the lands of landlord that he did not rent out, seeding potato on kitchen garden, painting house, fencing, and then taking crops to mill and winnowing it without taking any payment for the labor. They often offer hen and alcohol to the landlord in *Maghi* to get land. Similarly, sharecroppers have to

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<sup>7</sup> *Lauwa agrasan* is local news paper in *Tharu* language. It is published in district headquarter of Dang district.

provide *Kamlarhi/ orginnya* (female worker) for the landlords. *Orginnyas* are deprived from education. The *Orginnyas* some time even sexually abused.

The landlords are able to use sharecroppers for unpaid labor because all sharecroppers are not organized well. Instead of being organized well, all sharecroppers are fighting with each other. They are always interested to make landlords happy and to get land from him that is sharecropped by others. There is not any organization of sharecropper only. We can see different types of organization of peasants like '*Kisan Samuha*' and peasant organization of different political parties. There are about 80% sharecroppers in these organizations. No one is interested to open a separate organization of sharecropper.

Ownership right over land is closely related to the problem of the sharecropper. In fact, ownership on land, which is main means of production, should be of peasants. If the ownership of land is on the hand of those people who never touch the soil, it obstructs the economic development to some extent. There are more people from *Tharu* community who are worked as sharecropper. So it is necessary to organize all sharecroppers. While doing protest against sharecropping and its exploitation we should discard all the conditions proposed by the landlords and should make main slogan of 'land to the tiller'.

Source: Lauwa Agrasan National weekly, 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2009, Tuesday. (Appendix IV)

This example also shows that availability of sufficient labor is a cause of getting land for sharecropping. This text also explains about the exploitation of poor farmers by the landlords. It says landlords are able to exploit sharecropper because there is competition between sharecroppers to get land that is sharecropped by other peasant. It also explains that there is lack of a good organization of the sharecroppers and thus they are exploited. It requests all peasants to discard all the condition put by the landlord and organize well against the exploitation.

### **7.8. Sharecropping and efficiency:**

There is great debate among the scholars about the efficiency of the sharecropping system. The efficiency in agriculture is difficult to define. Commonly, efficiency is measured by relating value of total output to the value of total input (Grigg, 1995). It is my interest to find either sharecropping in this area is efficient in terms of productivity or not. The almost all landlords reported that sharecropping system is comparatively effective way than fixed system. More over, the labor in put in later system is high in terms of monitoring and management.

The landlords prefer the sharecropping system because s/he has relatively less family members to manage all agriculture land s/he owned. Before the abolishment of *Kamaiya* system (in 2000) landlords could keep bonded labor (*Kamaiya*) by giving fewer wages. The *Kamaiya* had to work



all day to the landlord's house. They also used to ask *Kamaiya*'s wife for free labor in the time for peak seasons. That's why they did not have to spend more on labor. Since there was low cost for labor, the input cost was also less for landlord. So before 2000 it was reasonable to care land by self. But now the cost of labor is high and the landlord must pay to the labor in the daily wage basis. Moreover the distance of land from the home is another factor for choosing sharecropping. The landlords said that the land far from home can not be cared well by them. Hence, the labor supervision is the main problem. Since peasant use their family labor for agriculture production the landlord do not have to spent more on labor supervision. The case of Mahendra Sanskrit University's land, which was rented by a third person and he rented out to the peasant for sharecropping also prove that sharecropping is the efficient way of land management to the landlords. The landlords further says that though they will cultivate by hiring labor, the uncertainty of rainfall, lack of irrigation facility and uncertainty of climate may lead loss for them by less production. In such cases they must pay more on input than the total out put. Some landlords even said that they had more production in sharecropping system than *Kamaiya* system in past.

**A landlord**, 52 years old. Before 2000, she cultivates her field by the help of *Kamaiyas*. At that time it was difficult fulfill family food needs during August and September. Her family even uses maize as main food item for those days. After giving land for sharecropping, now she has sufficient rice almost for 18 months. Now she is able to sell the surplus production. She do not have to be too much aware about crops and its growing situation. She explains about the situation of Muralidhar, who, this year cultivated his land by him self. His maize will not be good because there are unnecessary grasses in his field and there is no one to care it. So it is good to give land for sharecropping if they (landlords) do not have more time to spend agriculture.

The landlord said that if they give land for fixed rent then the peasant will use maximum potentiality of the field. They will use chemical fertilizers and different pesticides without proper care of soil and the land's natural productive capacity may drop. So they are against the fixed rent system. Though fixed tenancy gives full incentives to the tenant, the risk of asset mismanagement reduces its supply or landlord does not let the land on fixed tenancy (De Janvry, et al., 2001:16).

Despite to work as unpaid labor, peasant prefers for sharecropping system because it is their livelihood option available in local area. In past as they worked as bonded labor, they did not get well paid for their work. So they got less output compared to their labor cost. But now they are able to grow food for their family. They also added that in sharecropping system they can work as wage labor in other places in the off season time and during peak season after finishing their task in the sharecropped land. This is why it is a better way for their living. They fulfill the needs of staple food by sharecropping and the other needs are fulfilled by wage labor.

Similarly there is lack of access to credit market for the poor farmer. In fixed rent, peasants have to use all inputs (seeds, fertilizer) by themselves but they lack property. If they need money, they again have to ask with landlord and the landlord imposes high interest. Though there are some small cooperative banks, they need to show certain land as mortgage to obtain loan. These banks can give at more Rs 20,000 to the peasant if they use their citizenship certificate. They can also get the money if they formed 'saving groups' (*Bachat Samuha*) by being the membership of such banks. To get money they have to get consensus among their '*Bachat Samuha*' and they can get at more 20,000 from this also. But this is not sufficient amount to pay the money for fixed rent and to buy agriculture inputs. That's why, peasants can not afford for fixed rent. Though in the fixed rent peasants may use their labor optimally, they do not favor it because of uncertainty of climate. "The high risks and liquidity constraints reduced the demand for the land to contract" (De Janvry, Platteau, Gordillo, & Sadoulet, 2001:16). In case of crop failure peasants have to pay the rent in any cost. While in sharecropping peasant pay the land rent in the form of crop share after harvest. Hence, the sharecropping system worked as insurance for the peasant.

Peasants have some disadvantages of sharecropping. They have to provide the unpaid labor to the landlord. They also have to care some parts of landlords land without getting any returns. There is uncertainty for getting land to cultivate for another year for the peasants. So sharecropping could not be a best solution for the peasant. The peasants spend all their labor for agriculture production but get less return. A peasant says a Nepali saying "*Kaam garne Kalu makai khane Bhalu*" means one works hardly and another gets the returns is to some extent true to the peasants.

## **7.9. Discussion and summary:**

Classical Economists analyze sharecropping mainly with two models- transaction cost model and risk sharing model. "On one hand, risk-sharing models stress that, in the presence of a risk-

averse agent who can reduce in performing the tasks assigned by the principal, share or royalty contracts offer insurance and, at the same time, provide incentives for the agent to be diligent. On the other hand, transaction cost models tend to ignore risk preferences and focus on enforcement costs and transaction-specific assets” (Akerberg & Botticini, 2002:565). The Marxist political economy sees class relation or power to control available land resource as the main cause of sharecropping. In the study area it was found that most of the farmers fail to control the land resources because of state authority and lack of access to power. Then to find livelihood options available in local context, they choose sharecropping as their livelihood strategy.

Neo classical economists (NCE) (Marshall, 1961) see sharecropping as inefficiency because of the man are rational and their behavior is guided by the market relations (gain/ loss). Marshall (1961) explains that there is lack of stimulus of investment in agriculture in the sharecropping environment. Similar case was found in the study area since there is not any fixed rule for the agricultural investments. The agricultural input like fertilizer and pesticide are used in equal share, whereas use of compost in sharecropped land is of second priority after on the land under own cultivation. Though overall production has not decreased in sharecropping system compared to previous *Kamaiya* system, the optimum productivity of land also has not been met yet. Marshall (1961) explains sharecropping system in terms of rational decision of the peasants and the farmer. In the study area peasants and landlords do not take any rational decision rather they exercise it as their livelihood strategy. These theories can not explain the subsistence agricultural system well. Bahaduri (1983) argues that in the backward society market forces are not developed well. So, the explanation of sharecropping with market force (profit/loss) may not be appropriate to explain the existence of it in backward society. She points out that the peasants of backward society are not interested in gains or profit rather they are interested to fulfill family food needs (Ibid). In study area the peasant choose sharecropping system to fulfill their family need. Since they had small patch of land and it is not sufficient for them. As sharecropping system is only available livelihood option for the peasant due to existing social structure, they are not in position to calculate the gain or loss.

Cheung (1969) explains mainly two reasons for the existence of contract from: natural risk and different transactional cost. He explains that in fixed rent all risk is borne by the tenants and in own cultivation by the landlord. So, “under postulate of risk aversion, an individual will seek to avoid risk if the cost of doing so is less than gain from risk averted” (ibid, :63). Due to lack of

irrigation facility and the uncertainty of rainfall, landlord favors sharecropping. In this way, we can say the risk sharing explanation is some how relevant in the study area. Cheung (1969) added that motivation for work of tenant is greater than in the case for wage labor because share tenant is more interested to reap produce. In the past when landlords were allowed to keep *Kamaiya* they cultivated their land by the help of *Kamaiyas*. But due to lack of labor in their family, lack of time to care farm, they are practicing sharecropping system after abolition of *Kamaiya* system. If landlords cultivate land by themselves by hiring labor, they must spend time with labor. Other wise the labor productivity may decrease in absence of continuous monitoring. Since the motivation for work of tenant is greater in sharecropping the landlords do not have to spent time in field. But the priority to keep manure on their own land shows the peasant has motivation to work towards their own field than sharecropped land. The agriculture activities are always risky with climate uncertainty and the market fluctuations so the explanation of sharecropping with risk sharing model is not appropriate.

New institutional economics sees the existence of sharecropping in terms of uncertainty, imperfect information and transactional cost (Olsen, 2006). Eswaran and Kotwal(1985) explain the sharecropping in terms of '*dual moral hazard model*'. In this model they focus on two unmarked resources: the ability to supervise labor; and the managerial skill to make production decisions based on technical know how and market information. They assume that in contract, family labor is crucial resource and it is easier to supervise family labor than hired labor. They added that the peasants have better 'supervision' skill than the landlord and the landlords hold good 'managerial' skill due to his interaction with traders and financial institutions. Neither in fixed rent nor in own cultivation can the landlord and the peasant use their skills optimally. The landlords give lands for sharecropping because they are engaged in service sector and business and do not have more time to supervise labor and spend time with labor in fields. Peasants work in the sharecropped field in the absence of landlords and they produce different crops in time by using their family labor. But the recent trend of labor migration towards the big cities especially of youth peasants explains that the supervision skill of peasant on their family labor may not be appropriate. In such cases the peasant can not use their family labor in the agricultural activities. The youths without obeying their parents go towards the city for labor work. The landlords who are not living at their village or who are doing their business out side can not give more time for cultivation and can not take any managerial decision. In such situation, all decision about crop is done by the farmers.

All models referred so far, assume that tenants are landless or lack land endowment. But these models do not explain about the cause of poverty of the peasants. The Marxist political economy (MPE) views class relations as the root cause of the existence of any kind of contract form. According to Pearce (1983), landlords are always interested in surplus production and peasants have always more labors. The landlord compares the investment between fixed and sharecropped lands and availability of labors. In share cropping system landlords can get cheap labors with less investment, so s/he usually favors sharecropping system. Marxist historical materialism assumes that the landlords are powerful persons since past and have well control over the means of production (i.e. land). If we see the history of land ownership in Nepal, the land resource has always been controlled by the powerful person or state authorities. It was the case of Gobardiha VDC too, which was explained in chapter three. So control over the land by elite can be well explained through Marxist view of historical materialism. Marxist views development of sharecropping system increases in the transitional periods between feudalism to capitalism. Prior to 18<sup>th</sup> century, Nepal was divided into different small feudal principalities and each of them was ruled by their own king (Basnett, 2009:13). During 18<sup>th</sup> century, Gorkha king Prithvi Narayan Shah unified modern Nepal under a single kingdom. But the feudal structure was not changed the previous feudal lords were responsive to collect tax for the central government. In some areas (Sallyan, Bhajhang, Kirat Pradesh) the feudal lords had all right to use the lands of their respective kingdom and they only came under the umbrella of Nepal state. In this way the feudal lords were able to exploit peasant in the form of tax collection. The feudal structure of society was further furnished by the *Rana* by controlling all the state property. They gave responsibility of collecting tax to the local landlords who exploited peasants. They even awarded the lords by offering the land in the form of *Birta, Jagir*. Though, in 1950, the people's revolution threw the *Rana* regime and the democratic government tries to end feudal structure, it was not able to meet its aim due to lack of state influences in local level. The King Mahendra, by the help of army forces, was able to keep feudalism again. He introduced *Panchyat* system by banning the political parties in 1960. Up to 1990, the *Panchyat* system of governance was in effect. The *Panchyat* government had launched Land Reform Acts in 1964 to deteriorate the revolutions of banned political parties. This act fixed on land ceiling. As a result, the large feudal structure was reduced and developed the semi- feudalism, where small feudal lords (High cast Hill Natives) were able to buy land from large feudal lords. In Terai as a result of this and eradication of malaria too many hill natives were able to buy land and became small landlords. The system of *Kamaiya* helps them to cultivate their land in cheap labor cost. At that times some lands that are far from the villages were managed in the form of sharecropping. Till now Nepal has not well

developed towards the capitalist production relation. The existence of subsistence farming system instead of commercial farming, lack of capital investment in other sources of economy, shows it is still in feudal economy structure. The lack of development towards the capitalism in Nepal is due to the lack of national bourgeoisies to invest in manufacture sector, the market productions are dominated by Indian capitalist production and the lack of technocratic reformist officer in Nepalese government (Blaikie, Cameron & Seddon, 2002:1256). Nepal remains underdeveloped because India ('semi-periphery' (Wallerstein, 1974)) has powerful influence upon this ('periphery') country. So the Nepalese economic character still remains as semi-feudal character and the landlords were able to keep labor according to their will through bonded labor. After people's revolution in 1990 the democracy was again re-introduced. The democratic government has lot to do and develop capitalism in the country. Lately, in 2000, the government was able to abolish *Kamaiya* system and break the feudal character of Nepalese society. The democratic government led society towards capitalism by abolishing any kind of bonded labor. Now a days Nepal's society can be categorized as the transitional society between feudalism to the capitalism. During the slavery system the productive force's (the peasant's) standard was not developed well. After being free from slavery, the ex-Kamaiya (the productive force); due to lack of the commodity production in the form of 'free peasant proprietorship' (Gaido, 2000:80) and given structural constraints; had only one option to adopt sharecropping as 'a retrograde form of commodity production' (ibid). So, the existence of sharecropping is high where landlords are not able to keep *Kamaiya* for their agricultural land. In the study area it was general characteristics that all of the landlords who used to cultivate lands by the *Kamaiya* gave their land to sharecroppers. Though the Marxist model of sharecropping system is some how relevant in the study area which explains well about control over land resources by the landlords. I also find the case of reverse sharecropping. This case can not be explained well through Marxist model.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### 8. *Institutions and policies:*

#### 8.1. Introduction

Institution comprises all the formal regulations such as rules and laws to informal ‘regularized pattern of behavior’ (Leach, *et al.*, 1999:237) such as tradition and culture, norms and values which collectively shape the way social activities take place and our society functions. Barley & Tolbert (1997) conceptualize institution as “socially constructed and maintained through ongoing interactions [.....] which gradually acquire the moral and ontological status for taken-for-granted facts which in turn shape future interaction and negotiations” (p:94). Institutions are dynamic in nature. They continuously changed in course of people’s practice over time. In this section I discuss about the formal institutions (national level policies, acts, political parties rules) and the informal institutions that exists in local level and that help the local people to have access over the land. Sharecropping system it self is an institution which help local or poor people to have limited access over the land. But the full access to land for the poor or *Tharu* people is limited by different policies. Though different laws and acts were launched to provide poor people with rights to land, these acts were not implemented well. Similarly local institutions also limit poor to get access to land ownership as well as sharecropping. All these will be analyzed in this section.

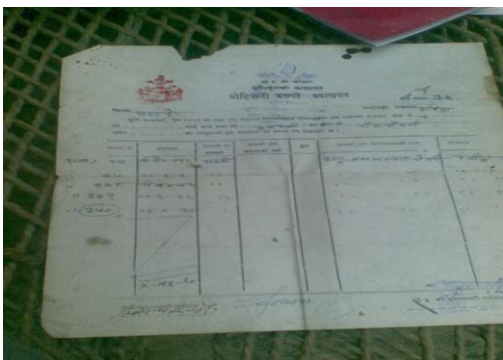
#### 8.2. Impact of Land Acts in sharecropping:

Before introduction of land taxation system or in ancient time *Tharus* were practicing shifting cultivation (McDonaugh, 1989:192). Their life style and the structure of house clear about that. Before being a part of unified Nepal, Dang was a part of Sallyan kingdom. “At that time Tharu paid tribute to the state via the *Chaudhari*, the revenue collector for the *Parganna* administrative division of the valley”. (ibid: 193). This type of tax collection method was used after unification of Nepal. But some years later, during *Rana* regime, some hill natives were assigned as tax collectors. By misuse of the law, the land of Tarai or Deukhuri valley was registered in there name.

When the land registered to the *Mukhiya* and there was no chance for the peasants to get land or access to land. They totally depend on the limited access of the land as given by the landlords for sharecropping. That means not all peasants have access to get land for sharecropping. Similarly, at that time there was system of bonded labor. So the peasants had to work for the landlords as

bonded labor. For this they got small amount of food, insufficient to sustain their family's livelihood.

During Panchyat (between 1960-1989) (active governance of late king Mahendra) the state launches a land reform act in 1960s, to control different peasants' movement on land. The Land Act, 1964 is most important among them. It fixed a new land ceiling and also gives certain rights to the peasants to complain for the property rights on the land they cultivate. But unfortunately, fixed land ceiling, was good for hill native who wanted to come and settle in Tarai. Similarly, the landlords kept the land in the name of all family members separately by which they could even control over land. The weak point of this act is that it is not implemented well. The land act 1964 explains that the tiller (tenants) can have ownership of the half part of the land he tenanted, for this he must have the tenancy contract document and a receipt of grain payment (CSRS, 2009:17). The task to get contract document and receipt from landlords is difficult due to fear of eviction. In some cases, landlord gave such document by describing small areas of land as in sharecropping contract. In turn the peasant had to obey the landlord, he had to work for the landlord as unpaid labor, and he had to sharecrop land for years. Some parts of the land were granted for the peasants after launching this act. Some peasants of Gobardiha say that they were granted small amount of land (as *Raiti*) after this act. But there was condition. The peasants had to work for land lord or they had to use landlords land as share cropping and they also have to work for landlords in peak seasons as unpaid labor. Similarly, by the help of National Land Right Forum (NLRF), Nepal some peasants are able to gain the land ownership certificate on the land they tenanted.



**Photo 8.1: Certificate of Tenancy Rights.**

As this act defined the tenancy rights to the tenant, there was fear of losing land by the landlords. In this act a person could claim for tenancy if s/he cultivates land for more than two years as sharecropping contract. Then landlords practiced to give his/her land just for a certain



period of time so that the peasant could not claim tenancy rights. This created the problem of uncertainty in the sharecropping contract.

The land act 1964 also gives rights to the peasant against ejection. It says a land lord can evict the tenant if tenant's act is against the increasing the productivity of land, they do not able to pay the rent or discontinued the cultivation. To evict the tenant, the landlord must go to the court. If landlord wants to sell the land s/he must pay 25% of land value to the tenant. The tenancy right was also hereditary (Sharma, 1984:66). But it was not implemented well till now.

### **8.3. Different political parties views on land distribution and land reform:**

Land and its distribution is a central issue of different political parties. If we look at the history of Nepal's political parties they always catch up the peasants as their main voters or supports. If we see the history of Nepali multi party system we can see each time parties wrote about the transfer of property to the peasant at their manifesto. During 1950s after the *Rana* regime Nepali Congress Party was the most influential political party of Nepal. It took the slogan of 'land to tiller' as the main slogan for the upcoming election of 1958. Till now, this is an important issue of the party but it has not been solved yet. Another political party Nepal Communist Party was founded in 1950. It has also the main slogan of land reform and equal distribution of land. In such way there are different political parties and their main target is to distribute land for the peasant or to give access to land resource to the peasant. During the constitutional assembly election last year, different political parties had made the land issue as the main issue for the constitution formation. The following paragraphs describe different political parties' views on land and its distribution to the tillers.

#### **Nepali Congress**

- Land reform to increase productivity and high use of agriculture land.
- Land reform by developing consensus among different political parties for the scientific (using modern technology and commercial oriented) land use
- Effective distribution of land to tiller by providing land to landless peasant, bonded labor, and tenant. (Source: Nepali congress, 2007).

### **Nepal Communist Party (UML)**

- Scientific land reform<sup>8</sup>
- Agricultural modernization and commercialization.
- Land would be distributed to freed labor and land less people.
- By considering different commissions report on land reform and try to make a high level land reform commission with full right to distribute land. (Source: CPN UML, 2007)

### **Nepal Communist Party (Maoist)**

- Basic rights of a peasant to get the landownership of that land he ploughs.
- Land will be distributed for those who plough the land (land to tiller).
- The feudal system of land ownership, absentee landlordism, should be abolished and revolutionary land reform should be launched.
- Land would be distributed to the freed labor, peasants, tenants, and land less peasants.
- Land ownership certificate would be distributed by registering both husband and wife's name. (Source: CPN Maoist, 2007).

### **Rastriya Janmorcha Nepal**

- Take away of the land if someone has more than fixed ceiling and distribute it for free to the landless peasant, freed bonded labors and tenants.
- Declares to keep rights of tenancy as defined by laws.
- There should be system of land to the tiller. (Source: Rastriya Janmorcha Nepal, 2007).

I asked local leader of different political parties about their views on sharecropping system and land right then the leader of CPN (**Maoist**) says, share cropping system is a kind of exploiting labor by the landlords. The landlords who have control over the capital (i.e. land) exploit cheap labor of the peasant. Through sharecropping they get crops without any investment in terms of labor. So there should be full access to the peasants on land because they spent almost all time for land. Since sharecropper spent almost all time in the agriculture land, there should be share of one third proportion between landlord and peasant.

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<sup>8</sup> The term scientific land reform is used widely in Nepal. "The termed scientific land reform denotes to the inseparability of redistribution and growth and to emphasize the investment required in the farm sector, alongside removing grossest inequities and labor exploitation, inequities"(Wily, Chapagain, & Sharma, 2008)

The most important economic feature of our society is the extension of feudal structure in land ownership or control of natural resources. Like kings have too many lands who never touch the soil by bare hand and the peasant who slept in soil never get ownership rights. It deprived peasant from land right. So the best way to provide peasant with land right, is the end of feudalism in society. And Maoist party act for this and now it is able to end the monarchy system in Nepal. Even now this party has to fight against different local feudal in the society. This party will try to end the feudalistic land ownership.

The *Guthi* land that is granted for certain temples should be cutoff. The temples can be run by the trust or the donation that a temple gets from the local people or by visitors. So land of *Guthi* should be distributed to the peasants who are landless. The leader further says that the main natural resources of Nepal at local level especially land; water and herbs or medicinal plant (*Jamin, Jal, Jadibuti*) must be controlled by the local people. The local people must be the owner of these resources.

There is pressure on limited land due to over population. So to solve high population density on agriculture we should increase of non agricultural based employment. To develop agriculture productivity we should follow cooperative farming system among small farmer and land should be given to tiller. Moreover we should change to the commercialization of agriculture from subsistence farming.

The local leader of CPN Maoist added necessity of revolutionary land reform. For this different land ceiling in each ecological zone and urban areas must be fixed. In the case of Tarai maximum land ceiling should be 4 *Bigha* (i.e. 2.4ha) per family. Hence, family comprises maximum seven people. If any one had more land than fixed ceiling state should take it and distribute to the landless. State will not give compensation on ceiled land. While doing land reform we should consider land fragmentation. Land fragmentation is another problem of our country. Small farmers are asked for cooperative farming system, agricultural modernization, crop diversification, commercialization of agriculture. Land tenancy right should be secured. If there are unregistered tenant then they should be recognized in local level through village investigation. Then land should be given to them.

He explained that, land was controlled by some handful person by force. They controlled land by charging high land tax. Almost cultivated land was used by local people since past but they were landless. It is natural resource and every one has equal right to use it. Among local people, the

person who is closely related with land (peasant) has more rights than other. If a landlord wants to work in agriculture land he should practice modern agriculture practice and he must pay enough wages to the agriculture labor.

The local leader of **CPN (UML)** also held same view as it is a system of peasant exploitation. But he said the share of production should be equal proportion (i.e. 50/50). He added that most important feature of our society is feudal structure, it deprived peasant from land right. They should end feudalist society. There should be scientific land reform. Land ceiling should be fixed differently in each ecological belt and urban areas. The maximum land holding size in Tarai must be 10 *Bigha* (6ha) per family. If some one has land that is more than fixed ceiling then more land should be controlled by state. The state should carefully investigate how he earned that land. If he bought land and got land with legal means he should be given the compensation, otherwise no compensation is needed. Land tenancy right should be secured. If there are unregistered tenants then we should know them and gave them tenancy rights and land. Land of *Guthi* should be distributed to the peasant who are landless and who worked in that land since past. He also said land, water, and medicinal plant should be controlled by local people with ownership right. Land should be defragmented and distributed equally to all, especially to the peasant. He also added commercialization and crop diversification in agriculture sector to cope with growing population.

Local leader of **Nepali Congress** said that sharecropping system is not bad as both party tried to get maximum benefit, but some peasants were exploited differently in our country. He added that the share should be 50/50 basis. He also says land should be given to peasant by launching land reform program. He also says the fixed land ceiling should be different in different ecological belt. There should be maximum 10 *Bigha* (6ha) per family. If any one had more land than fixed ceiling then state should control on that land. The land lord should be given compensation of the land he lost. The tenancy right should be secured.

#### **8.4. The NGOs/INGOs:**

There are different NGOs and INGOs that work for the enhancement of the peasant livelihood and provide them land as defined by acts. But still there is not any organization or any NGOs to work specially for the sharecroppers. There are different political parties sister organization of peasants. This section will be analyzed about the function of different NGOs/INGOs worked with peasants.

**CSRC (Community Self Reliance Center):** Community Self Reliance Centre is an important NGO on land issue. It is established in 1993. Its major activities lie in attempt to organize tenants and landless peasants to fight to get land rights. To run land movements this organization gets fund from different INGOs like Action Aid Nepal, DANIDA/HUGOU, Care Nepal, Oxfam GB and International Land Coalition (ILC). But this NGO focuses its activities in central Nepal.

**National Land Rights Forum:** National Land Rights Forum Nepal is the national people's organization of all the people working in the land including landless, squatters, tenants, trust land farmers, bonded laborers, farmers, *haruwa* (plougher)/*charuwa* (person look after the cattle), people of Chure, and all those deprived of land rights. This organization has been established with the sole purpose of uniting all the deprived people of land rights and getting involved in land rights agitation program as a whole.



**Photo 8.2: Activities of land rights people forum (CSRC, 2009)**

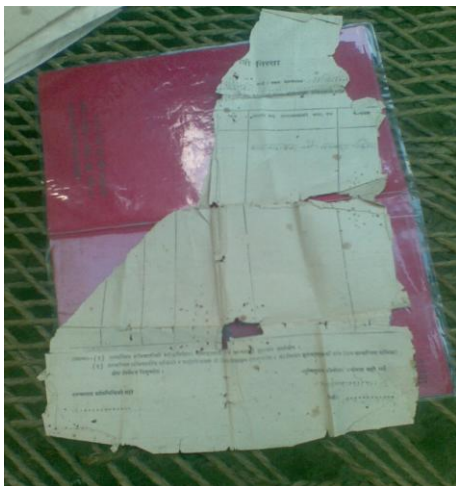
The NLRF has local to national level organization and working committees. In the Gobardiha it has also VDC level organization headed by the Harinarayan Chaudhary. And this organization tried to provide justice to the peasants.

**National Land Rights Concern Group:** National Land Rights Concern Group (NLRCG) is an advocacy forum for the people who are deprived of their rights to land. It was established in September, 2004.

### 8.5. Local level institutions:

Most peasants' access to land is controlled by the national level policies which try to give them some entitlement to the land. But due to improper implementation of the law or by the interest of the authorities they are deprived from the land right. At local level the peasants had certain or limited access to land. Sharecropping agreement is itself an institution by which peasants are able to get some access to land. But there are also different types of institutions at local level that helps or constraints peasants for the access to land.

The historical context in which land tenure system shaped in Dang (as described earlier) shows that the peasants are today landless or have very small holdings because of their weak position in **power relation** and **power negotiation**. In some cases landlords had intrigued land of peasant. Before land survey of 1965, peasants have temporary landownership certificate. During survey original certificate was distributed. While providing original certificate, landlord asked peasant to give their temporary certificate and they will provide them the original one. Landlord said peasants that since they are uneducated they may not able to do all process for getting original. But the landlords with the help of authorities registered their name instead of peasant in the original certificate. They returned back the temporary certificate to the peasant which was torn.



**Photo 8.3: Torn temporary land ownership certificate of peasants.**

**A peasant of 60 years old**, of Pachahiya said that “our father was illiterate. During land survey on 1965, the educated and well known person of our village took our temporary land owner certificate and the record of paid land tax to process for original land ownership certificate. But with the help of authorities they registered their name in our land and we became landless.”

Among different local level institutions, the first and most important is **kinship** relationships. According to McDonough (2000) “kinship is seen as culturally constructed in variable ways and may have to be properly understood as an aspect of overlapping domains including for instance notions of the person, conception and birth, discourses on food or land, local political and history and so on” (p:19). Hence the kinship relation is defined as the relationship that is developed after marriage, relation of being same clan, relation of sharing same culture. As discussed earlier those *Tharu* peoples had sufficient land, who had good relations or had kinship relations with *Patwari* in the past. Similarly, most of the hill natives got land from the *Mukhiya* because they share same culture or both of them are hill native and there was some relation. In 1964 when the government of Nepal fixed a land ceiling then the *Mukhiya* who had more than the fixed ceiling sold to the hill natives at a cheap price because they had some kind of relations with them.

In the case of sharecropping system also, local *Tharu* landlords have given land for sharecropping to the same clan (in local term *Gotyar*) people. Some have given land to their relatives. There is also kinship relation of *Tharu* which is developed in terms of relation with divinities (McDonough, 2000:31) for example; the relation of *Guruwan* (priest group) family with other *Guruwan* families. It is also found in field area that rich *Tharu Guruwan* families gave land for sharecropping to the poor *Guruwan* families. Specially, due to the fear of tenancy rights and the Maoist revolution (their main slogan is –land to tiller) they wanted to secure their property. This kind of kinship relation in sharecropping is being practiced among *Tharu* ethnic group only. There is no kinship relation between hill natives and the *Tharu*.

The Land Act 1964 defines the legal ownership of the land by peasant if they sharecrop any land more than one year. But this has not been implemented well because local level institution of ***Maghi***. Traditionally *Tharu* celebrate *Maghi* as agricultural New Year, it has been operating yet. In *Kamaiya* system *Tharu* used to celebrate *Maghi* as a chance to have new way of life. They used to negotiate with landlords for the wage. They could even change their previous landlords if they got high wage by other landlord. Unfortunately, landlords are able to legitimize *Maghi* as new agricultural calendar for renewing of contract. The sharecropping contract is renewed in *Maghi* each year in verbal terms. So peasants can not claim that they were sharecropping land for more years and also they lack with documented evidence. The lack of documented evidence deprived them to claim tenancy right in sharecropped land. Due to its nature of celebrating as big festival *Maghi* easily get legitimacy among social members to bargain for the new contract.

Another important local level institution is **Work relation**. This kind of relation is practiced between hill natives and the local *Tharu* peasants. Hill natives gave land to those peasants with whom they are familiar in past. Before eradication of bonded labor in 2000, most peasants worked as bonded labor in the rich hill natives' home. And now, we can find those peasants who worked as bonded labor are able to get land for sharecropping from the landlords. In previous days peasant would get land for sharecropping if they sent one of their family member as bonded labor.

**A peasant of 57 years** has worked as *Kamaiya* in a landlord's house for 10 years up to 1985. The landlord bought a tractor and he learned to drive it. Then from 1985 he worked as a driver of the tractor for the same landlord. But while driving, in 2002 he had fall an accident and he lost one of his legs. The treatment after accident is all done by the landlord. Then he has not any thing to do. Due to his good relation with landlord by working innocently to the landlord, he got some piece of land from same landlord for sharecropping. He has managed the agriculture activities from the help of his sons and daughter-in-laws. Now a days, he spends his days by weaving mats and *Dhakiya* (a king of domestic pot to carry load on head) and selling these items.



We can also see most of the landlord favor such peasant who had willingness to work as **unpaid labor** (*Begari* in local term) whenever it suited the landlords. This kind of relations is famous between both kind of landlords (hill natives or *Tharu*). There subsequently come many policies and regulations to abolished unpaid labor, it is still in practice. The Land Act 1964, (Article 37) clearly explains that any landlord is not allowed to take any kinds of unpaid labor from the peasants. Moreover the peasants' organizations also has played role in raising awareness among peasants against the *Begari* system. Recently somewhere Maoist has made different village level rules to fine the landlord if they make a peasant to work as *Begari*. But due to the fear of eviction



from sharecropping it is still in practice but its intensity has decreased. Such system can be now called in McDonough's (1997) term as '*New Begari*'. He explains that there exists one hidden interest of competition between tenants to obtain land. So they begun to engage in ironically referred term '*New Begari*' which might secure tenancy agreement to some extent (Ibid:296). Now in this system of '*New Begari*' the peasants have to do small tasks such as painting house, making roofs, fencing, ploughing some lands of landlord that he cultivate, taking crops to mill, winnowing it for making eatable, working in kitchen during feast and festival. Though it is not a necessary condition, but widely practiced because it is the basis for getting land for sharecropping.

In the past, the peasants had to work most time as unpaid labor to the landlords. But now, due to the Maoist force the intensity of unpaid labor has decreased. The Maoist had made a fine system to the landlords if they use peasants as unpaid labor. They have to pay three times more money than a daily wage as a fine. But still, it is in practice.

**A 68 years old tenant** of Gobardiha village, used to get land if he provided one of his sons as bonded labor to the peasant. It was the time before abolition of bonded labor. But now he could get land only if he is ready to provide unpaid labor to the land lords. He explains "We spent all our life for the landlords but till now we do not get any good returns."

One most important factor that deprived some of the *Tharus* from access to land is **joint family system** and importance of **household head**. Traditionally Tharu generally live in joint family. In this system the elder son of that family member becomes the household head (in *Tharu* term *Gardhurrya*). In this system if older person or parents are not able to work then they give all property rights to the elder son only. The position or status of *Ghardhurrya* becomes hereditary until the household splits or particular incumbent proves to be a misfit (Rajaure, 1981:157). The legal transformation of land property goes to the elder son. There is general work division between the sons. The elder is the household head and holds responsibility to manage all kind of economic needs of the house. The younger sons have to work in the field and the youngest one has the responsibility to look after the animals. In this way, the other younger sons have no rights on the land. They only have to work for the family. In such situation if the younger son is separated from the family he will not get any land because the land is already granted to the elder son.

**A 55 years old farmer's** parent died when he was young. Up to 2002 he used to live with his elder brother in the same house. At that time his work was to care cattle as well as plough farm lands. In 2002 he separated from his elder brother but did not get any share of parent property. He could not take any legal actions against it because he did not know well about it. It is difficult to go to district court because he has not any support and he cannot precede any legal action by himself. So now, he is sharecropping to fulfill his family food needs.

**Gender** is another factor that prevents women from getting land rights. Though there is active role of women for agricultural activities, they lack in land ownership. In study area there are less numbers of female with landownership. "The main means of gaining land is through inheritance, which is largely patrilineal. Thus, when discussing land rights and inheritance, women's rights are usually defined in terms of their relation to men." (Allendorf, 2007). Legally a widow can have land ownership of her husband and a daughter can also have parental property right if she is unmarried. After marriage she has to return her parental property right to the parents. In such way the national level legal provision does not allow for the female to parental property rights as compared to their male counterparts. Women have to live in her husband's house after marriage and she has to work for husband's land. Since women lack the personal property, interaction in political arena and limited experiences of interaction in public forum undermines their effectiveness (Agarwal, 2001:1640) and such social structure also does not allow female for land ownership. "*Arka ko ghara jane jat*" is a common phrase that connotes to female children in Nepal meaning that they have their home not in the family of their birth. This connotation has direct implication to women's deprivation of land rights. Moreover a female also does not have land ownership right in her husband house because our Nepali social structure is based on patriarchal property rights.

The work division according to **Gender** is also another important issue to get land for sharecropping. We discussed earlier about main activities according to gender for each crop. Among them timely ploughing the field for cultivating is main task. It is also considered as difficult task. This is done only by the male members. So, when giving land for sharecropping, landlords give priority to households with many male members in the family. Hence deep rooted gender ideology of our society that 'girls are physically less powerful than men is at work in this respect. In our society the term '*Chhori*' (daughter) have negative meaning associated with weakness. In this way the 'social perception discount women's abilities and opinions' (Agarwal, 2001:1645). I did not find any sharecropper only with female members.

Another most important institution that recently developed to access to land is **Maoist back force**. In past the access to most of the unregistered land was with certain handful of persons or to the rich landlords with whom there was access to power. Most of the landlords hold large proportion of unregistered land and use it. But now, if there was any unused unregistered land then it has been captured by the Maoist cadres. This land has then been distributed to the peasants. For example plain land or *Chaur*(grass land) near the jungle of this VDC is now captured by the Maoist and they divided this unregistered land to each family of the peasant of the respective village. Moreover Maoist insurgency also decreased the degree of unpaid labor that a peasant used to do in the past. Local Maoist leaders have made rules to fine to the landlords if they use their peasants as unpaid labor. In those lands where the tenants have legal documents of tenancy (*mohi*), the tenant had full control. They can cultivate these lands and use all the output from those lands. This system was developed by Maoist during their insurgency. But in some village where Maoist influence is less, the output of such land is divided in one third proportion between landlord and tenant.

Though Maoists are able to capture forest land or communal grazing land to distribute it to the local villagers, there is conflict between the government officers and the local people in this regard. The conflict between government office and local people about forest land or (grass land near the forest) often presented in local news papers. I am here presenting the news of December 9, 2009 and December 13, 2009 of *Naya Yougbohdh*.<sup>9</sup>

**Freed labor and landless are feared after the notice of district forest office (*Ban Karyalya Ko Suchana Pachhi Mukta Kamaiya Tatha Bhumihin Trasit*)**

Narayan Bibas, Ghorahi, 9<sup>th</sup> December. The district forest monitoring committee has published a notice on 8<sup>th</sup> November, to leave all huts and cultivation activities in forest area. All freed *Kamaiyas* and other poor people who used these lands, are feared by this notice. The freed *Kamaiya* organization Dang has launched interaction program about this issue and its impact. Most of the speakers in this interaction program stressed that the freed *Kamaiyas* and landless should be allowed to live on forest land until the alternative livelihoods solution has not been addressed well. They also said to distribute all illegal lands captured by the Jamindar (large land holders) to the peasant. They also asked all political parties for their support on this action. This program was held on the presidential address of the District Freed Labor Organization's

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<sup>9</sup> *Naya yougbodh* is a local daily news paper and publish from the district headquarter of Dang district.

president, Sunesh Chaudhary. The chief guest, the Officer of the district forest office, Kishorchandra Gautam explained that if the forest land is encroached and the forest users groups are not able to run the encroacher than government can take the community forest under its control from the forest user's group. So this action was taken on consensus of all interest groups.

Source: Naya Yougbodh, 2009.

### **Landless and freed kamaiyas' protest (*Bhumihin Tatha Mukta Kamaiya Dwara Pradarsan*)**

Narayan Bibas, Ghorahi, 13<sup>th</sup> December. Thousands of freed kamaiyas and landless people protested in Dang headquarter, Ghorahi against forest decision and committed that they would not leave the forest or government land they cultivate until they are not secured with other livelihood option by the state. They claimed the government tried to chase them in the name of misuse of forest land. They also said to take any kind of actions if the government took force against them. After protest they organized an assembly. Almost all land right activists claimed that the freed *Kamaiyas* and landless should not leave the forest land until government guarantees them their livelihood options. They also claim all political parties for not being serious on this issue. They asked for cancelling the notice put by the forest office other wise they will take different protest programs.

Source: Naya yougbodh, 2009.

These news obviously explains the conflict between state authorities and the peasants. Now peasants' activities are supported by the Maoist too. But there is uncertainty that either they will support such activities after forming the government and coming to the main political stream.



**Photo 8.4: Grass land (Chaur) of jungle is now cultivated by all local farmers.**

Maoists are able to legitimize their power in the village with the help of 'Agharrya' (village leader) system. *Agharrya* is a village leader. Traditionally, the Tharu community members used to elect one person from *Gardhuryya* of respective village as a village leader. His main task is to make decision at village level. After *Agharrya* another person is also selected as *Pucharrya* (the follower). His responsibility is to do all activities of *Agharrya* in the absence of *Agharrya*. This traditional village functionary was dismissed after introduction of Gaun Panchyat during Panchyat regime. In *Gaun Panchyat* election, *Odaadhyakshya* (ward chairman) was elected by village members or respective village through formal vote. Later reintroduction of democracy in 1990 the *Gaun Panchyat* changed into *Gaun Bikas Samitti* (Village Development Committee). In this also ward chairman is elected by formal votes. There used to be election for five years. Or the elected person has legal rights up to five years only. And he is responsible for maintain village level governance. But during this time also the local system of *Agharrya* was in action but it has less powerful than ward chairman. After the climax of Maoist movement, since 2000 the local level election has not been yet. And the legitimacy of local ward chairman has dismissed after five year. To fulfill this vacuum Maoist choose their leader according to traditional system as *Agharrya*, who was able to get legitimacy among villagers. So, Maoists were able to gain power among villagers and develop the Maoist back force as an institution. Now, the *Agharrya* selected by Maoist in each village makes rules and regulations of the village. Still there is uncertainty about if there will be village development committee election, then the *Agharrya* system will be in effect or not.

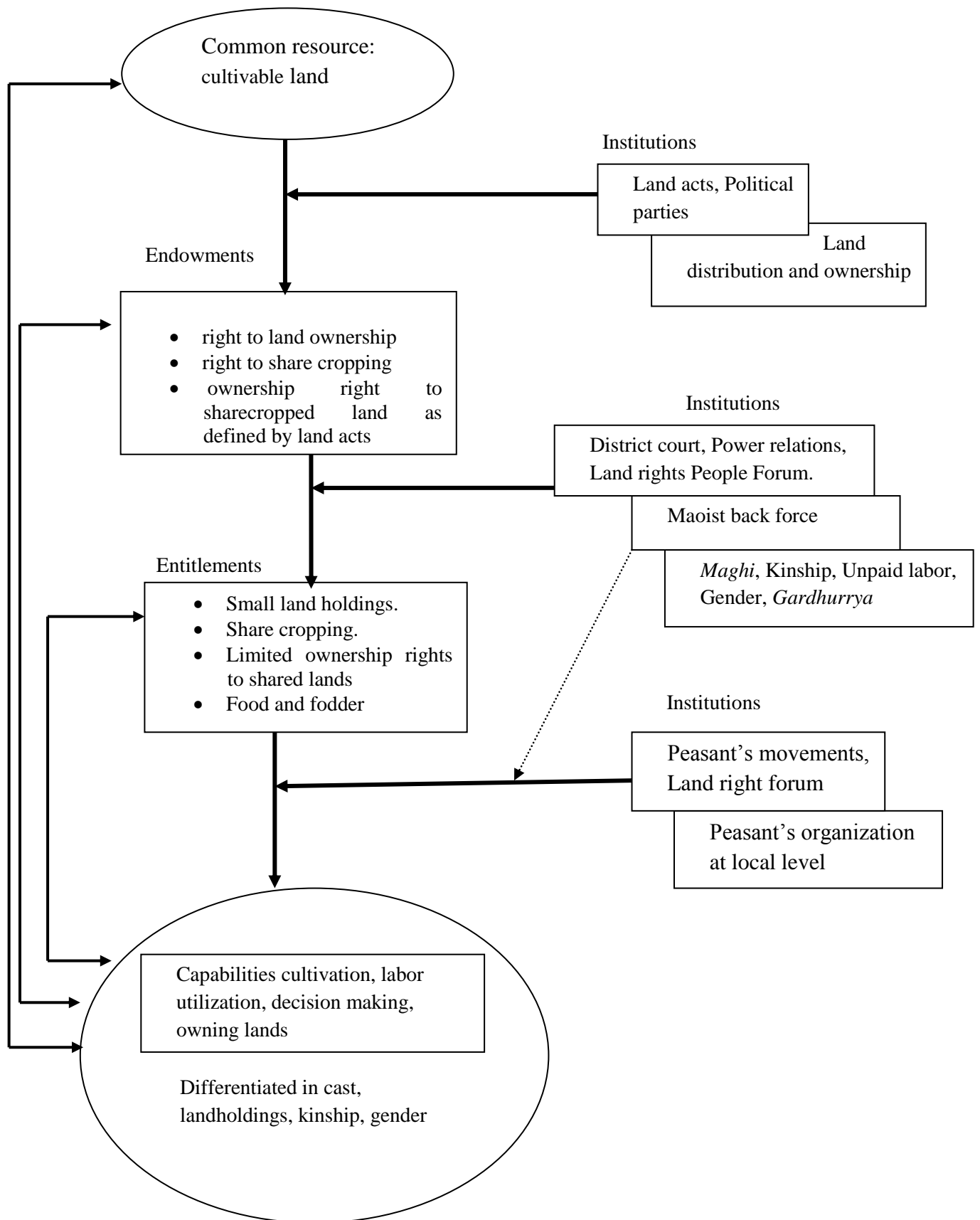
#### **8.6. Summary and discussion:**

Peasants' access to land is controlled by landlord. The history of the study area shows that the power relation is the most important institution to get access on land. The structure of property rights at various scales (e.g., the state, community and household) influences peoples' access to resources and land (Neumann, 2005:102). So I analyze the ways in which the institutions on property rights influence different community members' endowments and entitlements of land resources.

Land is a natural resource which is a gift to all people. But, land is all too often misallocated among potential users and worked under conditions of property or user rights that create perverse incentives (De Janvry et al, 2001:1). There are different social actors in the society and their power relations confined to the access over the land resources. In the study area the landlords and the peasants are different social actors that their status in society provides them to have

different landholdings. Thus people's endowments to land rights turned differently to land entitled. So, I tried to analyse these issues in the light of entitlement approach. The entitlement approach sees entitlements as the outcome of negotiations among social actors, involving power relation and debate over meaning rather than fixed rules (Leach, Mearns, & Scoones, 1999:235).

There are different factors that act to gain command to control over land resources. In the case of the study area the history of political power is the main cause that prevented poor farmers from their land rights. Though poor people had control over the land in past, the development of political structure and land value decreased the peasants' control over the land. Before *Rana* rule in the name of land tax, peasants did regularly lack in control over on land right. During *Rana* the tax system was so highly regularized that peasants had to totally depend on the local *Mukhiya* for access to land. After the down fall of *Rana* regime, the land reform practices tried to give access to peasant. But misuse of Land Acts provisions and the lack of well implementation deprived the poor from land rights. People have endowments of land right. The Land Acts and political parties at macro level tried to turn their land endowments to entitlement on land. They can not control over it due to lack of implementation of the macro level institutions like Land Acts and political parties' immediate interest of getting vote. The entitlement on land is often controlled by local level institutions like power relation with state authorities, gender, kinship, household labor division etc.



**Figure 8.1: Environmental entitlement frame work (Adopted from Leach et al. 1999)**

The sharecropping system itself is an institution that gives limited access to land for the peasants. The peasants themselves differentiated through sharecropping system as sharecropper and non-sharecropper. And to have access to land through sharecropping is also limited by the influence of different institutions. The institution 'sharecropping' tries to give peasant land right. According to Land Act 1964, the peasant who sharecrop a land more than one year, can claim over tenancy right. In macro level Land Act provides entitlement to control land. The difficulties to process for claiming land right such as difficulties to get written document of crop sharing with landlord, difficulties to have legal process (to go to the court time and again) create obstacles to the peasant for having land rights over sharecropped land. Similarly a peasant at micro level influenced by the institutions like kinship relation, *Begari* system, gender relation to have access to land for sharecropping.

Now, the Maoist back force has been a strong institution for the peasant to access land. In past any unused lands or unregistered lands were controlled by the landlords but now this is turned to peasants. But still there is uncertainty of how long peasants can control such lands. As earlier discussed the grazing lands surrounding the forest are now controlled by peasant with the help of Maoist back force. This arouses conflict between local district forest office and the peasant. The forest office claims it as the land of community forest where as peasants are cultivating crops on it. I asked a Maoist leader that, if they formed the government, they should obey the rules of the government that the community forest should not be used as private property. Then he replied that in such condition they will remain passive or they will not give any decision on it. This clears there is uncertainty of being peasants control over such fallow land for ever.

It is found that some institutions are actively involved to increase the capability of peasant. Among them the Maoist back force, by establishing local level village assembly, is actively playing a role to establish the peasant right to land as well as tenancy right. Similarly other institutions such as peasant movement of different parties, land right people forum are struggling to empower peasants and ensure their land right/ tenancy rights through legal assistance.



## CHAPTER NINE

### 9. Summary and conclusion

#### 9.1. Summary:

Sharecropping, as the form of land contract is one of the land management systems that people of the study area are practicing. Where land rich leases the land and land poor cultivate the land by using his/her labor. Among the total population, 8% landlords rent-out their land for sharecropping and the 10% of total population rent in the lands. All contract agreement is in the form of sharecropping except in the *Guthi* lands. The number of peasant is greater because a land lord can have more peasants. This also shows the unequal land distribution among the landlords and the peasants.

In sharecropping system the output is shared equally. There is no fixed rule about the share in input. Capital intensive inputs Crop seed, chemical fertilizers and the cost of using pumping set (for irrigation) are shared equally. The labor is totally borne by the peasant. Some where if peasant used the tractor or hired labor for cultivation, it should be paid by the peasant. Generally, the agreement of share cropping is done in '*Maghi*' for a year or it is renewed in the '*Maghi*'. But it can go for longer year if the peasant satisfies the landlord in terms of production and security. Landlords like honest and hardworking peasants where as peasants like large land holder and gentle landlords.

Especially, due to the lack of access to labor to the closer market, the old age peasants are engaged in sharecropping. The lack of any kind of insurance for old age, they are engaged in sharecropping as their main source of livelihood. There is high family size of the tenants compared to landlords. Most of the peasants are *Tharu* because they lack with land ownership. And the literacy status of peasant is also obviously less than the landlords.

The lack of food availability for family, lack of employment opportunities for labor work and availability of sharecropping as a livelihood option in the village area are the main causes for the peasants to choose sharecropping as their livelihood strategy. On the other hand; land fragmentation and distance of agriculture land from village; abolition of *Kamaiya* system are the main cause for the landlords to rent out the lands.

Sharecropping has not substantially affected to the cropping patterns and same agricultural calendar is followed by the farmers. Somewhere, lands near to the house and more productive lands are used by the landlords for own cultivation. Because it is easy for them to care as well as

they want to minimize the input in contract firms. Due to availability of time and being free than in *Kamaiya* system peasants are able to keep more livestock to earn livelihood. The use of modern technology is low in sharecropping land because most of the labor input cost has to be borne by the peasants. One obvious thing in sharecropping is that most of the decision of cropping is made by the landlords. This creates problem to the peasant to fulfill their immediate needs through cereal crop production. Peasants are able to buy some lands as well as increase their properties due to sharecropping and being freed from bonded labor, but still they have fear of eviction at any time.

It is obvious that landless or small land holders rent the lands. Then another main issue of my study was also to find out the institutional constraints that deprived poor from access to land. Or why some people can control the more land resource where as some lack? I tried to explain it with the help of 'institutional approach' (Leach, 1999). The Tharu, who had access or control over the available land of Tarai in ancient time, are deprived from its control slowly by the state or small principality in the name of tax collection. They are over exploited by the '*thulo manche*' (powerful person) and remain peasant for ever. The power relation of the high cast hill natives with rulers provides them the overall control of land resource. Some low cast hill natives, who were already marginalized in hills, were also marginalized in the Tarai, though they came to the Tarai for searching best opportunities.

Though the national level policies have always tried to provide peasant the land right, these policies were misused or not implemented well. The state's governing power is always controlled by the elite group who did not care to implement these rules and policies because they might lose their control over the land resources. At the local level; institutions like kinship relation, work relations, division of labor in house hold level, gender division of labor prevent poor to access land. Recently, Maoist back force is developed as an institution to have access to fallow lands or unregistered lands. But there is uncertainty that peasants will have control over on such lands for ever or not.

## **9.2. Conclusions:**

The main task of this study is to find the situation of sharecropping system, its impact and some institutional constraints to get access to land by the poor.

There are several models to analyses the existence of sharecropping. The Neoclassical economic (NCE) theories see it in terms of efficiency. There are two main models: the Marshall's (1961)

model sees sharecropping as inefficient and the model of Cheung's (1969) sees it as efficient. This study also found that sharecropping comparatively efficient. The landlords find it efficient because the labor cost they have to spend more in own cultivation. The peasant sees it as efficient because it is available in local level for their livelihood and some of them able to change their life standard.

The New Institutional Economics (NIE) sees it in terms of uncertainty, imperfect information and transactions cost (Olsen, 2006). It explains that the labor tries to reduce the labor power in the wage labor in absence of wise supervisor where as in sharecropping they are supervised by the family members and supervise their labor well. And the landlords have good managerial skill due to their interaction with traders and financial institutions but lack the supervision skill because they are engaged in business or service activities. In this sense, land is best managed in the sharecropping system. This is some how true for the non- existence of fixed rent in the study area. The landlords gave land for sharecropping because the cost they have to spend for the supervision and other transactional cost to hire labor for own cultivation or fixed rent is high in own cultivation. But the cases, where landlords does not live in the village (absentee landlordism) and the peasant does not able to force their children for agriculture activities, these models do not been applicable to explain the existence of sharecropping.

The Marxist Political Economy (MPE) and historical materialism sees the class relation as the root cause of the existence of sharecropping, where landlords want to exploit cheap labor of peasant community and have surplus production. It also explains that the elite class people have access to power and able to control over the land (production) resource. If we see the history of land ownership of this area we find that the land resources were controlled by powerful elite due to their access with state authorities. In the past due to the existence of *kamaiya* system, landlords can use cheap labor for agriculture activities. And after abolition of *Kamaiya* system, the increasing number of sharecropping can be well explained by the Marxist views. But it can not explain the existence of sharecropping in past and the case of reverse sharecropping. So, while explaining about the existence of sharecropping we should not explain it with one model, which can be best in a specific situation. All model of sharecropping are the complement to each other. And it is necessary for us to look critically to the existence of sharecropping by keeping all models in mind.

Sharecropping as an institution, provides peasants little access to land resource for their livelihood. But there is not equal access to all poor peasants for land to sharecropping. Though at

macro level the Land Act, 1964 tries to guarantee tenancy contract for ever, it is not implemented and the agreement is done for one year only in the *Maghi*. The Land Act gave peasant right for ownership of the half proportion of land they sharecrop and some benefitted by getting tenancy '*Mohiyani*' right. But there are several peasants who had *Mohiyani* certificate but not ownership of land. Their issues are on court, and have not been solved yet.

The peasant who had some kind of kinship relation can easily get the land for sharecropping than other because landlords fear of the Land Act, which gave right to the peasant to claim for ownership on the land they contracted. Another way to get land is to have worked relation with landlords. Generally, landlords favor those peasants who had worked in landlords as *Kamaiya* in past. Similarly the peasant who serves the landlord by offering unpaid labor can get easily the land for sharecropping. And the family with lack of male adult members does not get land for sharecropping. The gender division of work is the main cause behind this. Now a days, the Maoist back force has been a strong institution for the peasants access to the land and to land for sharecropping but still it has uncertainty.

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# APPENDIX I

## 10. Questionnaire survey

(All information achieved will be used only for the thesis purpose)

Date:

Survey Location: .....

House hold survey information

### Part (A) Preliminary information

A (1) Name of house hold head

Address: VDC ward no. settlement

Ethnicity/Caste: sex: male female age:

Marital status: unmarried married divorced single

Occupation:

A (2) Name of the respondent if household head is absent:

A (3) Family background of house hold (do not include married daughter but include divorced daughters if living together and household servants if any)

S. N.	Name of family members	Relation of responding person	Sex, 1= male, 2= female	Age (completed year)	Literacy 1= literate 2= illiterate	Level of education (passed class)	Marital status, 1= unmarried, 2= married, 3= divorced, 4= Single	Main occupation 1= agriculture 2= business 3= service 4= retirement 5= foreign employment 6= student 7= wage labor 8= servant 9= unemployment 10= seasonal workers 11= others (if any)	Occupational place 1= village 2= out of village( same district) 3= Kathmandu 4= other district 5= India 6= other countries



A (4). Which religion do you follow?

A (5). Where is your birth place?

A(6). Economic Status

What is the average yearly expenditure of your family?

Topic	Expenditure (in rupees)
Food	
Clothes	
Education	
Transport	
Water/ electricity/ Indhan	
Health	
Others	

What is average yearly income of your family?

Topic	Income (in rupees)
Agricultural production selling	
Agricultural production consumption	
Service	
Industries / Business	
Transport	
TA/DA/ Pension	
Casual labor	
Foreign employment	
Others	

**Part (B) land ownership/ Tenancy Information**

B (1) Do you /your family member have any land? Yes ( ) No ( )

B (2) If yes how is your land ownership condition?

SN	Used of land	Total land area	Unit (Bigha/kathha/ropani)	Types of land (Abal, doyam, sim, char)	Area of own land in self use)	Tenure in	Tenure out	Area of double ownership
1	Paddy field							
2	Bari							
3	Site for house and kitchen garden							
4	Forest							
5	Pakho							
6	Others							

B (3) Do any of your female family members have land ownership? Yes ( ) No ( )

If yes, how much land in female's ownership? Area ..... Unit.....

If not, what are the causes for not registering land in female's ownership?

1.                                  2.                                  3                                  4

Do your culture affect on land ownership? Yes ( ) No ( )

If yes, describe.....

B (4) is the land owned by you and your family members enough for the livelihood? Yes ( )

No ( )

If no, how much land is necessary for your family? Area.....

B (5) Do you know land ceiling enforced by the government? Yes ( ) No ( )

B (6) If yes, what is the ceiling for this place? Area.....Unit .....

B (7) How many person's livelihood could run by that ceiling?

B (8) Is the ceiling enough for your family to run livelihood? Yes ( ) No( )

B (9) If no, how much land is needed? Area..... Unit.....

B (10) Is it necessary to improve the present land ownership condition? Yes No

B (11) What short of efforts need to be made to ensure the access over land for all?

B (12) How is your understanding on effects of land ownership on production?

B (13) What short of impact armed conflict put on land ownership?

Positive Negative

B (14) Give details about effects of armed conflict over land ownership.

Positive effects	Negative effects

B (15) Do you or your family have follow agriculture land? Yes no , if any give following details.

Area of follow land	Unit of land	Cause of uncultivated land	Further planning for utilization of follow land

B (16) Do you have tenant farmer in your land? Or do you rent in land from the landlords? Yes no , if yes give details of area used for tenancy. Area .....unit...

B (17). How many years do you rent out (or rent in) land for one peasant (or one landlord)?

B (18). How many peasants (or landlords) do you rent out (or rent in) land for sharecropping?

B (19). Do you use modern technology in your land?

B (20). Do there irrigation facility in your land?

B (21) Do there irrigation facility in your sharecropped land?

B (22) Do you use tractors for cultivate own land?

B (23) Do you use threshers in your agriculture activities?

B (24) Do you use improved or hybrid seeds for cultivation?

B (25) Do you use tractors for sharecropped land?

B (26) Do you use thresher for sharecropped land?

B (27) Do you use improved or hybrid seeds for share cropped land?

B (28) How do you share seeds for tenanted land?

B (29) What are the major crops in sharecropped land?

B (30) Do you cultivate cashcrop in sharecropped land?

B (31) Who decide about crop in sharecropped land?

## **APPENDIX II**

### *11. Check list for interview/ group discussion:*

1. Crop patterns/ crop calendar.
2. Impacts on agriculture activities due to sharecropping system. Causes for small landholdings.
3. Access to lease the land.
4. Factors that affect to lease the land.
5. Land leasing and gender relations.
6. System of unpaid labor.
7. Land ceiling limit for this place.
8. Problems in equitable distribution of land.
9. How to improve the present land ownership condition.
10. Land reform issues.
11. Impact armed conflict on land ownership and management.

12. The newspapers

लम्बदार तीन पेजम...

## खै ? अधेरुवनके मुक्ति

**प्रसादु चौधरी**

सोमुक ध्यार दिनसे मन चौकस नै हुईन । उ आपन दिनचर्या त मजा से कट्टी बात मुले मन भर भुहार पर्ल रठ । सक्करही उठक खेत्य नष्ट, दिनबुर्जा घर पुगठ । जातीसे कलसे हुंकाहार भुख, निद सक्कु हेरागैल बाटीन् । हुंकाहार मालिन अनुहार देख्क हुंकाहार जलम जोह्या साउनी फे मुरभुराईल बिलौठिन् । चम्पन फे कसीक रह सेवही, आपन दिल जोरल जोहेक अनुहारम कन्या बढी देख्नी देख्नी ।

थी सालअनुहार छावा दशवा पास होरखीन् । एवाह उच्च शिक्षक लाग सदरमुकाम पठा रखल । ओहर असौअ छाईक भ्वाज फे लटर पटर ओरारखल । अभिनसम रिन सापट खाज नै परल हुईन् । हुकाहन छावाह पढाई नैसेकम् कैक चिन्ता नै हुईन् । दमाद नै मजा पर्ल कैक फे चिन्ता नै हुईन् । चिन्ता बाटिन त थी कारण, असौ उ अध्या खेत्वा ज्वात नै पईना हुईल बात । काकर की हुकाहार घरम काम करूईया मनै नै रहगैल हुईन् ।

थी समस्या खाली सोमुक समस्या केल नैहुईतीन् । सोमुक असक बटैया खेतीक भरम परिवार पलुईया सक्कु अधेरुवनक हुईतीन् । नेपालम कमैया मुक्ति २०५७ साल साउन २ म हुईल, मनै कमैयन् वास्तवम मुक्ति नै पईल हुईत । हुकर अधेरुवनक नाउसे फे पहिलक असक कमैया मेरक व्यवहार करावा पैनी बात । यहा खाली नाउ केल फरक बा, कमैया ओ अधेरुवा, मुले स्वरूप उह बा । असिक अधेरुवा जग्गा टब्बकेल ज्वात व्चार मिल्लीन, जव जग्गा धनीक ढरल हरेक

**विशुद्ध अधेरुवनक संगठन अभिनसम नै देख गइल हो । विभिन्न ठाउम मेराईक मेराईक संगठन देखजाईत मुले अधेरुवनक नै देखगइल हो । विभिन्न संगठनम जस्त किसान संयुक्त, तरहर प्रणाली आदीम लगभग ८० प्रतिशत अधेरुवन काम करट देखजाईत मुले अधेरुवनक हुट्ट संगठन खोल्ना आजतक फे नै देखगइल हो ।**

शर्त मन्ना मञ्जुर होजाईत । मलिकवाह कासिक हुईठ फुस्लाईक पठिन् । छिपल मर्गक तङ्गीकसग बोलक दारू मलिकवनक मुहम परल त जानो एक बरपक लाग जग्गा कमैना पक्का ।

**बटैयाक रामकहानी**

बटैया पईना ओत्रा सजिल नै रहठ । ज्याकरलाग जग्गा धनीसे ढरगैल मेरमेरीक शर्त अधेरुवन मन्ना मञ्जुर हुई परठ, अन्यथा जग्गा कमैनासे वञ्चित हुई परठ । असिक अधेरुवन मलिकवन फुस्लाईक ते हुकन्हक वारी जोल्ना, आलु लगैना, घर निपना, बेहवा बेहना, घर बनादेना ठेसे लेक खाईक लाग धान कुटा देना, फटक देना जसिन काम निशुल्क कैदेहक पठिन् । ओस्टहक जग्गाधनीक घर वरदेना ओ बाहिरी कामक अलावा जग्गा धनीक भात-भान्सा कैदेना, गोबर काहार देना, कामक लाग ओरगीन्या देना चलन फे ध्यारनक देखजाईठ । यसीक ढरगैल ओरगिन्यन् शिक्षासे त बञ्चित हुईठ - हुईठ । ओकर अलावा बाल शोषण ओ श्रम शोषण प्रचुर मात्राम होगील देखपरठ । सबसे अत्याचार त टव हुईधन । जव हुकन्हक उपपर यौन शोषण हुईधन । जग्गा ज्वात दिहुईया सक्कु जग्गाधनी एकक पहातम नै पठ, जग्गा धनीक जग्गम रहल स्वामिव अनुसार जग्गा धनी दुई मेरक बात ।

वित्खोरक ह्यारवेर कोई जग्गाधनीन् आपन जग्गम जग्गाधनी बनल बात कलसे कोई आनक जग्गाम भोरपेल्वा जग्गाधनी बनल बनल बात । यसिक बास्तविक जग्गाधनीन् ओरगीन्या लेना बेगारी करैना सेत्तीम जग्गा जोतैना काम कर्थ कलसे भोरपेल्वा जग्गाधनीनक खिस्सा आउर चम्पन लगतीक बातीन् । असिन भोरपेल्वा जग्गाधनीन् और बास्तविक जग्गाधनीसे मिथ्य ओ ओकर जग्गा अत्न व्यवस्था कै देना कैक मग्थ ओ विभिन्न शर्त सहित अधेरुवन देथ ओ आपन घरायसी काम

लम्बदार तीन पेजम