

4881315924: MAJOR: INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
KEYWORD: COMMUNITY/NGO/PARTICIPATORY MANGROVE FORESTRY/
MYANMAR

NWE MAR ROEHDER: COMMUNITY – NONGOVERNMENTAL
ORGANISATION INTERACTIONS IN PARTICIPATORY MANGROVE
FOREST CONSERVATION IN AYARWADDY DELTA, MYANMAR:
ASSOC. PROF. M.R. PRUDHISAN JUMBALA, 87 PP., ISBN 974-14-3505-3.


Community participation in forest conservation activities is a key Myanmar government policy for the forestry sector. This study aimed to examine the dynamics of interaction between the non-governmental organization (NGO) and the community in this context.

The hypothesis was that given the economic, social and political circumstances in Ayarwaddy Delta, Myanmar, the level of success in community participatory mangrove forestry depended on community participation and NGO facilitation combined.

Qualitative research methods were used. Some primary and secondary data were collected from documents. However, in the main, primary data was collected in the field through observation, indepth interviews of NGO staff, focus group discussions and key informant interviews of villagers in three sample villages in Bogalay Pyindaye forest reserve of Ayarwaddy Delta that were operating under a local NGO-facilitated development project.

The study found that the villagers were at barely subsistence level economically and were thus keen to participate in community forestry (CF) so as to gain long-term land tenancy rights as individuals and to increase their income. The CF users have put the forestry technical skills taught by the NGO to use such that short-term benefits have accrued to them. However, the Forest Department (FD) manpower shortage and officiousness meant that the community-FD relations were weak. The NGO was frequently active as intermediaries between the users and FD. Community participation in CF was found to be strong but limited by dependence on the NGO which the users regard as a benevolent patron. Thus, participatory mangrove community forestry has achieved short-term success because of community participation and NGO facilitation combined.

However, participation was found to have been employed only as a means, simply to achieve project goals, rather than as an end, to empower villagers. The study argues that participation as an end is necessary for long-term sustainable forest management. However, the given social, economic and political circumstance makes empowerment an unrealizable goal.

Field of Study International Development Studies Student's Signature: 
Academic Year 2006..... Advisor's Signature: 