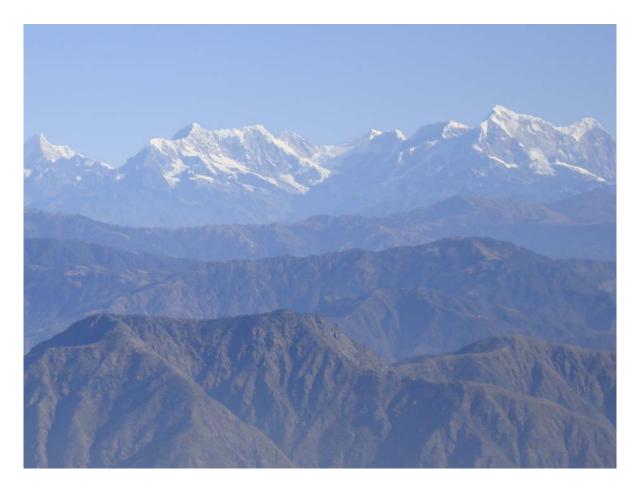
PRE-FEASIBILITY STUDY OF PHIKKAL TOURISM AREA



PHIKKAL RURAL MUNICIPALITY

FISCAL YEAR 2074/75

Team Members:

Ms. Parbati Sunuwar Mr. Chet Bdr. Bishwokarma (Ward No. 1 Chairperson) Mr. Shanker Bhandari Mr. Tek Bdr. Rajan Magar Mr. Prem Thapa Magar

Submitted By:

Purusottam Maharjan Engineer District Technical Office, Sindhuli

(Rural Municipality Vice Chairperson) (Ward No. 2 Chairperson) (Ward No. 3 Chairperson)

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BACKGROUND

Sindhuli District, a part of Province No. 3, is one of the seventy-Seven districts of Nepal with Sindhulimadhi, Kamalamai Municipality as its district headquarters and covers an area of 2,491 km². In 2001, it had a population of 279,821, in 2011 the population was 296,192. It is surrounded by Udaipur in east, Rautahat, Kavreplanchok and Makawanpur in west, Ramechhap and Okhaldhunga in north, Sarlahi, Mahottari and Dhanusha Districts in south. There are varying thoughts found about the naming of the Sindhuli district.

- I. Before being annexed as the integral part of Nepal, it was under the governance of Makwani king. During 1530 Raghab Narendra Sen was the King of Makwanpur and was renowned as the Sindhul. He had outseted the settlement over this region. Since then it got the name Sindhuli.
- II. At ancient time the great saint used to dwell in the hill (1077 m above sea level) of nowadays Sindhuli madi. He was popular as Siddha Baba (one who got enlightened) among residents of Sindhuli district. This place got its naming under his name and began to be called as Siddhasthali सिद्धस्थाली) place where enlighten lives). With time it got deviated and began to be pronounced as Sindhuli.
- III. An indigenous group (Tamangs) were predominant in this region. These indigenous people call Singthuwa (सिङ्धुवा (for cutting down tree and Sinthuji (सिङ्धुजी (for collecting timber.Due to the presence of intense forest within this region the herding of goats was popular and way of living was dependent on agriculture and forest resources. Over time due to gradual deviation in the naming this region got its name as Sindhuli.

Among the nine local levels of Sindhuli, Phikkal Rural Municipality is one of the local levels lies in the north east part of the district. It has Katari Municipality of Udaypur district in the East, Golanjor Rural Municipality and Tinpatan Rural Municipality in West, Sunkoshi river in North and Dudhauli Municipality in South frontiers. According to the Census of 2068 BS, it has total population of 16,968 with 8,143 Male and 8,825 Female population containing 3035 households. Different castes are dwelling-in with social harmony, mainly Magar, Sunuwar, Chhetri, Brahman, Dalit, Rai, Tamang, Newar, Bhujel, Majhi, Madhesi and others. The rural municipality is spread in 186.06 sq.km. area and consists of six wards namely ward no. 1 Mahadevdada, ward no. 2 Pokhari, ward no. 3 Kholagaun, ward no. 4 Khangsang, ward no 5 Solpathana and ward no. 6 Ratnawati.with Rural Municipality office centered at Khangsang.

INTRODUCTION

This report is a pre-feasibility study for the proposed development of a tourism area in Phikkal. The Phikkal Rural Municipality has a vision of developing Phikkal as a tourism area in view of the beauty of the natural environment of this area and hence rural municipality has planned for preparation of Tourism master plan to linkup different tourist attractions and places of heritage interest in the area. Rural municipality has planned for preparation of detailed project report to analyse cost estimates to establish Phikkal as one of the well-developed tourist destination places in Nepal and also search for sustainable funding options for development of the area. The natural environment here presents ample opportunity for tourism development. The tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries internationally and currently in Nepal Tourism visit year has been declared to promote tourism industry all over Nepal.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the project is to:

Further develop the Phikkal area and its surrounds in order to draw more visitors to the area and to encourage them to stay longer in the vicinity by providing interesting and interactive displays, activities, etc.; while ensuring benefits to the local community and preserving heritage resources.

The objectives of the project include:

- **D** To expand the current attraction to increase visitor numbers.
- □ To create employment and skills development opportunities e.g. tour guiding, the management of the project, etc.
- **D** To link with other tourist attractions and places of heritage interest in the area.
- □ To provide opportunities to locals with regard to the sale and the production of arts, crafts and souvenirs, the provision of food and beverages to visitors, etc.

PURPOSE

The Purpose of this prefeasibility study is to determine the possibility, feasibility, viability and sustainability in developing Phikkal as tourism area. The study looks at the various components that must be addressed before entering into a tourism enterprise (i.e. existing infrastructure, safety, training, etc.). The study also addresses the need for community-based tourism business in social, economic, and ecological terms. The report provides suggestions for the community regarding alternative means of generating income that also pose little threat to their natural resources.

This document can also be taken as the outcome of the current preparatory stage of Phikkal Tourism Area Development Programme with a purpose to carry on this Program into physical construction stage later after securing funds from local level, national level and international level development partners after accomplishing the preparation of all specific designs and documents. So this Program preparation modality of rural municipality is considered to be rather unique due to the fact that it is commissioned with the support and funding assistance of rural municipality itself.

After thorough review of relevant documents and data, discussion was made among the team members and stake holders concerning tourist attraction places and components to be included in the planned prefeasibility study of tourism development area.

This prefeasibility report has been produced as result of study of tourism development area during walkover and review of relevant maps, reports and documents.

LOCATION MAP

Various maps showing study area, Phikkal Tourism Development Area are shown as below:



Fig. Sindhuli District in Nepal

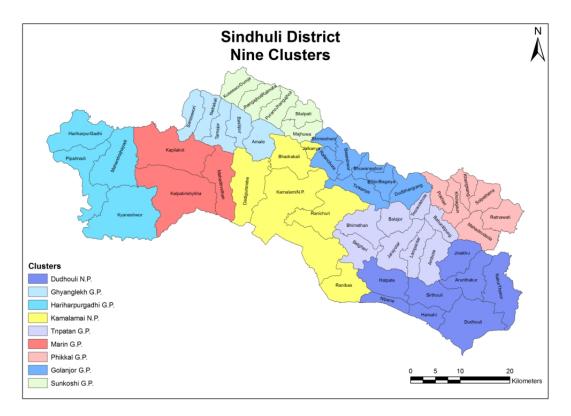


Fig. Nine Clusters of Local Level in Sindhuli

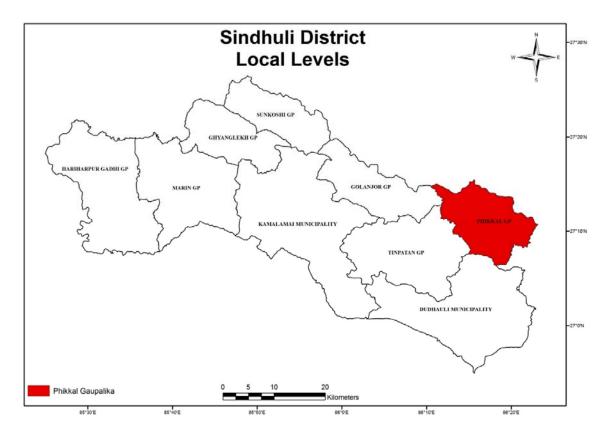


Fig. Phikkal Rural Municipality in Sindhuli

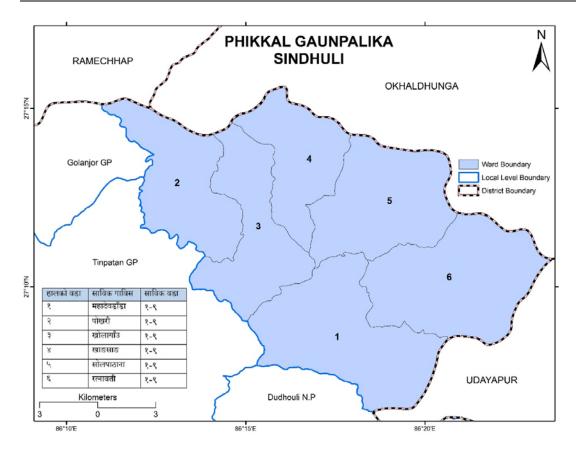


Fig. Phikkal Rural Municipality with ward profile



Fig. Google map showing Phikkal area

THE STUDY TEAM

The study team for prefeasibility / walkover survey comprised the Vice Chairperson of Phikkal Rural Municipality Ms. Parbati Sunuwar (Team Leader), Ward Chairperson of ward no.1 Mr. Chet Bahadur Bishwokarma, Ward Chairperson of ward no.2 Mr. Shankar Bhandari, Ward Chairperson of ward no.3 Mr. Tek Bahadur Rajan Magar, Mr. Prem Bahadur Thapa Magar, an engineer Mr. Purusottam Maharjan from District Technical Office and a forester Mr. Bhim from District Forest Office.

In addition to the above mentioned core team, the team had fielded the necessary human resource and all required logistics for the study in terms of engineering feasibility, social viability, environmental sustainability and economically beneficial. Local public were also involved for exploring the site and provide relevant information regarding site area.

METHODOLOGY

DESK STUDY

The team collected documents, drawings, study reports, maps to acquire and extract key information for execution of prefeasibility study of the Phikkal tourism area.

Following activities carried out during desk study:

- Studied the Phikkal Rural Municipality profile.
- Studied the maps, articles and available reports indicating the tourism area.
- Collected all relevant guidelines, norms, handout, specification and maps whatever available for desk study.
- Study has been made to find out the possible environmentally sensitive areas from where the motorable road and trail route pass through.

MEETINGS

<u>Meeting – I:</u> Meeting was organized on Ashad 08, 2074 at Phikkal Rural Municipality-01, Mahadevdada. The need for feasibility study of tourism area is felt necessary to be done as soon as possible and discussions were held on work delivery, understanding of program requirements and responsibilities of team members in general, and procedures and time frame management in particular. Discussion was also made among the local people about the need for tourism development, current status of infrastructure development, need of rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructure development. The members present in meeting were:

i.	Ms. Parbati Sunuwar	- Team Leader
ii.	Mr. Chet Bahadur Bishwokarma	- Member
iii.	Mr. Shankar Bhandari	- Member

Invited Members

viii.

ix.

х.

- iv. Mr. Dhana Bahadur Karki
- v. Mr. Khadga Nepali
- vi. Mr. Ramesh Khatri
- vii. Mr. Rup singh Sunuwar
- viii. Mrs. Ful Kumari Bishwokarma
- ix. Mr. Bal Kumar Magar
- x. Other Local People

- Rural Municipality Chairperson
- Ward no. 6 Chairperson
- Ward no.1 Member
- Ward no.1 Member
- Ward no.1 Member
- Ward no.1 Member

<u>Meeting – II</u>: Before the commencement of pre-feasibility study, meeting was held on Ashad 24, 2074 at Phikkal Rural Municipality – 03, Kholagaun as a kick-off point for pre-feasibility study. Discussion on how to move forward to accomplish the task in a systematic manner keeping in view of the limited time was done. Also, the Team Leader drew attention of the individual member for carrying out the duties and responsibilities as prescribed in the meetings discussed earlier. A need of management support system, communication, and coordination was expressed. The participants in this meeting were:

i.	Ms. Parbati Sunuwar	- Team Leader
ii.	Mr. Tek Bahadur Rajan Magar	- Member
iii.	Mr. Chet Bahadur Bishwokarma	- Member
iv.	Mr. Shankar Bhandari	- Member
v.	Mr. Prem Bahadur Thapa Magar	- Member Secretary
Invited Members vi. Dhana Bahadur Karki vii. Bishnu Maya Sunuwar		- Rural Municipality Chairperson - Ward no. 3 Member

- Ward no. 6 Chairperson
 - Ward no. 3 Journalist

MEETINGS WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND GENERAL PUBLIC

Mr. Khadga Bahadur Nepali

Bal Bahadur Nepali Other Local People

Local people were contacted prior to commencement of pre-feasibility walkover survey. Meeting among team members was also held regarding the plan of team for the study of tourism area. Local people were interviewed and meetings were held among all the stakeholders during the period of walkover survey and all the useful suggestions about the development of Phikkal as tourism area were noted down.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Phikkal and its immediate surroundings are characterized by temperate climate with hot moist summer and cold dry winter. There are mainly four seasons in a year.

Winter Season (December-February) it is cold at night with temperatures sometimes below zero. However, the maximum temperatures can still reach up to 15°C and the air is very clear.

Spring Season (March-May) Days are increasingly warm with temperatures around 20°C and the rhododendrons are in bloom.

Summer Season (June-August) The monsoon season when temperatures can get quite warm, up to 25°C. It will rain most of the days. The hills turn lush and green. Visibility can be mixed. During this season, trekking is difficult and uncomfortable, the trails being very muddy.

Autumn Season (September-November) The most pleasant trekking season where days are warm, but not hot and skies are clear. Temperatures are not too warm, with daily maxima about 20°C and cool nights, it usually does not rain for more than one or two days.

The soil in Phikkal is characterized by colluvial, black and mountain soil in some places. The vegetation over most of the region consists of tall trees of uttis, chaap, salla, chilaune, bamboo, katus, lakuri, painyu etc and tall grasses of gayo, kutmiro, dudhilo, kabro, phashro, dhanuphasro, nibaro etc.

The environmental quality is good in the area in terms of noise/air pollution. Minimal litter is found in the area, but is increasing as the population grows in Phikkal. The water source comes directly from springs, rivers and rivulets. The water is safe to drink and free from harmful water-borne viruses.

THREATS TO THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Many villagers stated through informal interviews that a high rate of veld fires is occurring throughout the year in the immediate surroundings of the village. The notable frequency of veldfires in the area can be attributed to the combination of severely dry climate and the human presence in the area. Human-induced fires have been started in Phikkal to secure the village from wildlife, for agricultural purpose and also to eradicate ticks that plague the local cattle population. The natural frequency of fire in this environment is likely to be in the order of 20% i.e., a given area burns one year in five on average. Another key threat to the natural resources in the area is deforestation where some forest area is converted into farm lands, trees are cut down to be used for building or as fuel in the form of timber. Poaching is another key threat to wildlife which has increased due to the access roads created along the forest line. Significant declines in populations of most large mammal species have also been the result of uncontrolled hunting, loss of habitat and displacement by livestock. Illegal collection and trade of medicinal herbs is also an immediate threat to conservation of plant species in this region.

IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF TOURISM AREA

Phikkal Rural municipality rich in geological and cultural diversification has many possible areas for tourism development. Some of few discussed among the team about the overall area can be enlisted as below:

- The seven storied view tower is under construction at ward no 3 lies at an elevation of approximately 2350 m from where amazing view of Himalayas such as highest peak Mt. Everest, Kanchanjunga, Makalu, Manaslu, Choyu, Lotshe, Langtang, Gaurishankar, Ganesh Himal, can be viewed. Further, view of Eastern Nepal, Mid Terai and most of the areas of Bihar state of India has added the beauty of the area. The natural scenery from this area gives pleasance to the visitors.
- Phikkal has plenty of natural resources, traditional cultural and heritage sites to share with tourists. The famous Mahakali temple lies at ward number 3, hattidhunga, many mahadev temples in the periphery and cave at ward number 3.
- Dressing in traditional clothes, making local crafts, as well as other customs and traditions can be revived for the purpose of a cultural tourism project.
- Traditional foods include yari, chamre, gormali, thedo, gundruk, pork and chicken items. It is possible that most of these items can be made available for interested tourists.
- Traditional dances are still carried out by the community on a regular basis usually in a religious context.
- Accomodations of thatch and sticks, resembling the traditional sleeping quarters are available in the community.
- Phikkal has a great potential in agrotourism which encourages the visitors to experience agricultural life prevalent in these places at first hand. People here are mainly involved in kiwi farming, potato farming, cardamom farming, ground apple farming, bee keeping and other organic farming.
- The forests in this region is rich in medicinal herbs such as loth salla, jatamasi, kurilo, jethimadhu, panchaunle, amala, harro, dhayari, pakhanbed, paheli, dhasingre, timur, thulirudilo, khayar, sallo, jamuna, bel, cheuri, asuro, koiralo, dhaturo, babari, kafal, gurans, aiselu, sisnu, bayar etc. These medicinal herbs can be the source of research studies in the field of medicine and botany. Furthermore, medicinal plants continue to be used for healing purposes among many community members. However, as western medicine is introduced into the community through the health clinic, its use is becoming more attractive to those who are able to afford it.
- First class trig point has been established at Rachanetham danda (Bhedikhor), Mahadevdanda by Department of Survey in 2039 B.S is also one of the places of tourist attraction. From here the view of Eastern Nepal, Mid Terai and most of the areas of Bihar state of India can be viewed which has added the beauty of this area.
- The natural green environment in Phikkal area can be developed as the best trekking route for tourist. The trekking route discussed among the team is Chanaute - Phikkal View Tower – Damar Chowki – Solidanda – Bhedikhor – Chitrenange – Siddhicharan Highway.
- Phikkal Rural municipality has planned to provide trainings to the local people for horse keeping which can be used as the means of transportation which can also be one of the source of tourist attraction.

• Rafting in Sunkoshi river is also taken as one of the possible activities for tourist attraction which the rural municipality has planned to conduct detail feasibility study in near future.

PRE- FEASIBILITY STUDY / WALKOVER SURVEY

A pre-feasibility survey has been conducted with a preliminary assessment of engineering/technical, social and environmental aspects that will further assist in identifying the project for detailed studies and survey.

Pre-feasibility study is a vital study for preliminary assessment of any project to examine its viability, suitability and practicability in terms of technical, environmental, social, and most importantly economical point of view. This study helps in the process of taking decision about implementation of the work proposed. Apart from this, prefeasibility study helps to identify its impact, problems to be addressed and potential solutions in a systematic and effective manner in the detailed design and construction phases.

The team carried out the following tasks under prefeasibility study or walkover survey of tourism area:

ENGINEERING FEASIBILITY

During walkover necessary engineering data and information were collected using appropriate forms and formats for preliminary engineering assessment to see whether or not the particular project is technically feasible for selection. Technical difficulties and problems related to site conditions, infrastructure construction, accommodation and utility status, availability of food and drinking water, electric power system are discussed in this phase.

The preliminary site condition, natural topography, site morphology, and appropriate type of civil structures that can be assessed are discussed during the pre-feasibility study.

PRELIMINARY SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

An initial social appraisal was done for assessment of the project. Consultations with the local beneficiaries/villagers were carried out to verify their demand/requests on the prioritized /selected project components. The study was complemented by the data/information from secondary sources and verification of which was done at field level. The information on wards, major settlements, population densities, ethnicity, and indigenous people inclusive of major occupation and poverty situation (food sufficiency) data are to be collected and included in the Detailed Project Report of the project.

RAPID ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING

A Rapid Environmental Screening carried out to make a preliminary assessment of each project components, from an environmental perspective during walkover survey. Similarly,

examination has been done for "No Significant Impacts" on other infrastructure project components in the vicinity. All necessary environmental data collected and observations made using the forms and formats as per Environmental Guidelines, Eligibility Criteria and Guidelines for the Prioritization and Selection of project components. Extensive consultations with the local beneficiaries/villagers carried out during a Rapid Environmental Screening.

RESETTLEMENT SCOPING

The resettlement scoping as part of walkover survey was conducted to make a preliminary assessment of potential losses of assets particularly in private land and properties in the selected project components. Community consultation meetings were organized along the proposed components to find out the interest of local people to be involved in the project component construction works. The potential for land donation also explored in the community consultation meetings.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The economic analysis of proposed project shall be prepared in detail project report. The economic appraisal is aimed at determining the "economic viability" of the investments and contributes to the assessment of the overall EIRR, benefit cost ratio (BCR) and sensitivity analysis.

It is recognized that it may be difficult to achieve threshold for a number of the proposed project sub-components, where social needs may be an equally valid justification for the scheme. It is clear that development of tourism area can provide substantial benefits overall to the communities served.

INFRASTRUCTURE

WATER SUPPLY:

Water is regularly supplied to a reservoir tank and then into household pipelines by means of gravity flow system. Water source is currently available at Chanaute and the surrounding area. There is no any source of water at view tower location and hence solar pumping is necessary for proper supply of water at this location as it is located at relatively high altitude. This water would be used for showers, toilets, cooking and drinking purpose too. Bottled water would need to be provided for drinking purposes, as many tourists are weary about drinking unpurified water.

POWER SUPPLY:

Fuelwood is the basic source of domestic energy, which is collected in the vicinity of Phikkal. This resource is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain as the population grows. Solar power is the only power source providing electricity and energy for operating equipment. Most of the households in Phikkal have solar power with small capacity of 10 watt provided with the subsidies from Alternating Energy Promotion Center (AEPC) whereas health post have capacity up to 2000 watt and the ward office buildings have capacity up to 1000watt. LP Gas is used to operate stoves in a few of the households.

WASTE MANAGEMENT:

There is currently no central location for disposing waste, and litter can be found throughout the village. In many places, large holes are dug to dispose of rubbish, which is eventually covered over when they become full and used as organic manure. Paper products are sometimes burned. Toilets exist in all households in the community as the area has already been declared as "Khulla Disha Mukta Kshetra". Educational training of proper waste management is initiatives which rural municipality is addressing with the community.

COMMUNICATION:

No land line telephones are present in Phikkal. Telecommunication tower of smart cell and sky cell are located in view tower location and is providing service throughout tourism area. Ncell telecommunication tower is located at Khangsang and Solpathana whereas Nepal Telecom tower is underconstruction at Poti, Khangsang so due to distant location they have weak coverage and hence doesnot provide good service throughout tourism area. There is no any radio station in rural municipality. However radio at these location is able to pick up signals from neighbouring districts such as Solu FM, Ramechhap FM, Vision FM, Sunkoshi FM, Kalinchowk FM, Hajur ko Radio etc.

TOURISM-SPECIFIC INFRASTRUCTURE

TOURISTS INFORMATION CENTERS

The office of Phikkal Bikash Samiti located at Chanaute is working in promotion of Phikkal as tourism area and has been playing important role as information centre for the visitors. Recently, this office has been providing relevant information to the visitors about Phikkal Tourism area.

TOURISM SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Currently, no tourism facilities and services exist in the area, including accommodations, restaurants, tour and travel services, and shopping facilities. All necessary infrastructure must be developed and rural municipality has proposed to conduct training programmes to local people to

conduct home stay for tourists with proper lodging, fooding and other facilities. The closest tourism accommodation (proper facilities with ablution block and running water) are located at Khurkot approximately two and half hours drive from Chanaute on the way to Kathmandu.

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Only one road can be used to access Phikkal starting from Sumnambesi located at highway. The road is blacktopped up to Sumnambesi which is located approximately 35Km from Khurkot and 25Km from Ghurmi. The road is earthen from Sumnambesi up to Chanaute with approximate distance of about 30km. One can hire private Bolero or can use locally available Boleros as a means of transport as the terrain is difficult and road is not much good condition. The view tower location is approximately 2 hours drive from highway.

QUALIFIED OR TRAINABLE LABOR

None of the people in the village have worked in the tourism industry. Hence, trainings is must and Phikkal Rural Municipality has planned to organize trainings for local people in order to develop skilled labour for tourism industry.

TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

No any institutions, organizations and NGOs are available for skills training. There are currently no institutions specific to tourism and hospitality training, however the rural municipality seeks for institutions interested in tourism development in Phikkal and has planned to conduct trainings to the local people to run improved and well managed home stay facilities for tourists in the tourism area which plays an important role for their economic development.

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH ACCESSING THE DESTINATION

A local bolero to Chanaute from sindhuli costs NRs. 600 each way about travel time of approximately 5 hours. However, clients can hire their own vehicle which costs approximately NRs. 8,000 per day.

COSTS OF STAYING IN THE AREA:

The accommodations available for tourists visiting Phikkal view tower area would be at Chanaute with typical village accomodation. The accommodation fee at current time is cheap with approximately NRs. 1,000 per day as infrastructure with all facilities are not well developed in the area.

COMMUNITY SENTIMENT OF COSTS AND BENEFITS OF TOURISM

No workshops addressing the benefits and possible problems of tourism development have been conducted with the tourism area. If after presenting the findings of this pre-feasibility study, the community wants to continue with the development of a cultural tourism project, then an awareness workshop is needed to be held with the community. An ecotourism awareness workshop can play important role to mobilize the community to make the educated decision as to whether ecotourism is a viable option for their collective futures. This can be done by presenting basic concepts of conservation, sustainable tourism, information about the tourism industry, and the benefits and risks involved in tourism ventures.

FINANCIAL INVESTMENT NEEDED TO START OPERATIONS

The start-up costs for the tourism project is greatly depending on the current infrastructure in the area, level of training, etc. It is difficult to produce initial and concrete figures for Phikkal, as improvements to infrastructure, etc would be implemented over time. Furthermore, transport of materials to Phikkal view tower will be quite expensive and variable depending on the type of materials, suppliers, etc. Marketing would initially be covered by Phikkal Rural Municipality, until an office is established with proper communication links to the community Trust to serve as a booking office. Some basic costs that would be incurred by the community include (these figures are averages):

Infrastructure for accommodation	NRs.10,00,000/-
Electrical solar system	NRs.50,000/-
Water supply system	NRs.1,50,000/-
Septic system/soak aways	NRs.1,00,000/-
Heating system	NRs.25,000/-
Furnishing for accommodations:	NRs.50,000/- per hut including bed, chair, table, mosquito net and place to hang clothes
Training and Capacity Building:	NRs. 50,000/- for the first year.
Road Improvements:	NRs. 10,00,000/-
Total:	NRs. 23,75,000/- start up

The costing of the individual accommodation is dependent on type of structure. Of course, using local materials is the most cost effective.

The start-up infrastructure was chosen to meet the needs of the high paying clients. Fewer infrastructures would be required for the more basic, but low paying client. A shower tent and toilet tent can be used instead of building blocks. These facilities can still be comfortable (i.e. portable, self-containing toilets, heated water for bucket showers using simple fire), would be less expensive and more environmentally friendly, as concrete would not need to be brought into the area.

FINANCIAL CAPACITIES TO INVEST IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Phikkal rural municipality does not have enough capacity to invest in tourism development at the moment and seeks for financial assistance from all government, non – government and private organizations. The community can also apply for loans in national development banks for tourism purpose which may be small, medium or large scale.

TOURIST SAFETY

PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME LEVEL

Crime is currently not a concern in Phikkal. While after the development petty crime, such as pick pocketing, may be associated with tourism in poor areas in congested settings.

PHYSICAL SAFETY

A few potential risks exist for tourists in the area. There is no potential risk of wildlife in the tourism area however, some common animals sometimes pass through the village and surrounding. Proper precautions and tourism education might be helpful to ensure the safety of tourists. The major safety concern posed to tourists is the poor condition of the roads. Cautious driving is a must on earthen roads that are prone to pot holes and other obstacles that increase the chances of accidents, especially at night when visibility is low.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Proper sanitation and hygiene are a concern for Phikkal tourism area. All households have toilet facilities in the village or at the tourism site but there is no adequate sources of water nearby. The community uses the few water points in the village for all of their water needs, including drinking water, washing clothes and bathing. There is no source for water supply at Phikkal view tower area so it is must to find for suitable alternatives of water supply system at this area may be by solar lifting system. Purified water must therefore be provided for tourists in the village to avoid spreading of water borne diseases.

Finally, no proper clinics are found in the immediate area. However, a government health post is present at Lumti of ward no. 2. Therefore, access to medical assistance would be slowed in case of an emergency. Tourists coming to the area should have the proper traveller's medical insurance to cover medical evacuation costs. Many older tourists, or those with known medical problems must take extra consideration as to whether visiting a remote project is feasible for them.

POLITICAL STABILITY

At present context in Nepal as three level of election including local level election has been successfully accomplished, Phikkal Tourism Area has long term politically stability. This stability also applies on a smaller scale to the lack of conflicts between various tribes.

TOURISM MARKETING:

Marketing is a difficult obstacle for all projects in the region. Most of this is due to lack of experience, and inaccessibility to technology and communication outlets. There is no any organizations facilitating for tourism development in the area. The office of Phikkal Rural Municipality and Phikkal Tourism Development Committee facilitates tourism marketing in some extent. No marketing body exists for communities (similar to the Hotel and Tourism Association which represents the private sector).

POTENTIAL IMPACT

The developments proposed and suggestions made will contribute towards the following impacts on the local community, environment, etc. The following benefits are discussed briefly:

CONSERVATION IMPACT OF TOURISM

The philosophy behind ecotourism is that it creates businesses and jobs that directly depend on a healthy environment, and can motivate people to protect their natural surroundings. It is hoped that a tourism project in Phikkal would help to minimize and control the amount of litter, poaching, veld fires, which are of concern in the area.

It is believed that a cultural tourism project in Phikkal would have minimal impact on the environment due to its small scale. Issues of concern would be proper removal of waste (human and rubbish) from the site. Water pollution could also result from improper disposal. Furthermore, cultural activities should cause minimal disturbance to natural environment. Road into the area has the capacity of creating significant noise pollution, and would require a large area of land to be cleared. However, the quarrying of material for surfacing of roads and infrastructure construction will result in ecological changes in the soils, and shall not be permitted in the Phikkal view tower location without an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE). This should minimize any negative impacts in the area.

SOCIAL IMPACT OF TOURISM

Tourism can help to pay for conserving the local nature areas, archaeological and historic sites, arts, crafts and certain cultural traditions as these features are the attractions for tourists. Tourism encourages a greater environmental awareness and sense of cultural identity by residents when they see tourists enjoying their environmental, historical and cultural heritage.

- Revival of culture and traditions that have not been practiced in the last decade. This knowledge can be transferred to children under 15 who do not know about their cultural heritage.
- □ Skills improvement in book keeping, English, tourism, marketing, etc.
- □ Part-time job employment as cook, office staff, trekkers, guides, dancers, etc.
- □ Increased income generation

- Potential for Improvement of local living standards. If sufficient revenue is generated, it can go into improving community facilities, services and infrastructure.
- Promotion of entrepreneurial spirit. Other local markets and products can up to sell to tourists.
- □ The overall environmental quality of the village may be improved as a result of tourism, as tourists prefer to visit attractive, clean and non-polluted places.
- □ Promotion of a sense of pride and ownership among local residents.
- □ Participation by locals in the management and planning of the project.
- □ Upgrade of infrastructure that will benefit locals e.g. improved roads.
- Empowerment of historically disadvantage persons, including women.
- **Training opportunities in connection with the project.**
- □ The provision of enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural and environmental issues.

If sufficient revenues are generated, a community conservation fund could be set up to reinvest in the conservation of the community's natural resources—a genuine concern of the Phikkal tourism area.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Employment of locals during construction of facilities.
- □ Full time employment manager, assistant, cleaner, security guide, maintenance person, etc.
- Employment opportunities for guides that have already been trained.
- Deportunities to local communities traditional meals, village-stays, etc.
- □ Opportunities for local crafters decoration of huts, shop at Interpretation Centre.
- Opportunities with regard to the extension of adventure activities

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The negative environmental impacts can be minimized by:

- **u** Use of natural materials for construction.
- □ Small groups to ensure low impact on the carrying capacity of the environment.
- **D** Participation in nature-based activities

SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

A summary of benefits in line with Responsible Tourism Development that promotes sustainability includes:

- □ Low impact developments and the focus on nature-based activities.
- □ Involvement of community representatives in planning and management of the project.
- Economic benefits and employment opportunities created for locals.
- □ Eco-friendly practices.
- Experiential learning, learning about the local culture and interaction between visitors and locals.

FUNDING OPTIONS

The Department of Tourism, Tourism board, Provincial Ministries and Rural municipality could be a possible source of funding for the project.

General funding considerations by the mentioned institutions involved include that projects should:

- **Contribute to poverty alleviation**,
- Create employment and training opportunities,
- □ Promote community ownership and management,
- □ Promote the empowerment of women and youth,
- □ Promote socio-economic development within communities,
- □ Benefit historically disadvantaged or rural communities, etc.

Projects are in some cases expected to contribute a certain percentage of the project capital expenditure cost or are encouraged to enter into partnerships with private sector funders.

It is also suggested that the memberships are opened to individuals from the community. This will contribute to a sense of ownership within the community and ensure additional funds through annual membership fees or sponsorships.

It is suggested that a main donor or funder be sourced that will provide long-term funding and support during the development and the operation of the project towards ensuring that the project is economically viable and sustainable in the long run.

FEASIBILITY AND VIABILITY

At a long run, tourism project at Phikkal can be considered as:

- a) Feasible: within the communities capabilities to transform the opportunity into a business.
- b) Viable: the business can be transformed into a profitable business.

However, this is the case if the start-up costs can be covered through a grant, infrastructure can be put in place, proper marketing support to identify and book clients can be provided, and the community is properly trained. As tourism grows and evolves in Phikkal, the business' likelihood of success will increase. Infrastructure is increasing in the area. The road extension and improvement project is ongoing and perhaps other improvements are to follow. If the community can develop some of the infrastructure required for tourism development, from other income generating projects then perhaps the success of a tourism project can be achieved earlier.

The small market and remote location will always be obstacles to a successful business, regardless of whether start up and operational costs have decreased. Small-scale tourism should always be approached as a supplemental activity, and not the sole source of income for the community. Note that/ the minimum amount of time required to start a tourism business, from inception to business plan to implementation, etc. will take a minimum of 2 to 3 years. Therefore, if a community is in need of immediate income, other alternatives should be considered as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to develop Phikkal as tourism destination, first and foremost job is to upgrade and improve the road network connecting tourism area as present earthen road is at worst condition and is a major obstacle for tourism development in this region.
- □ Lack of electrical power is another obstacle for tourism development in this region as the whole area has to depend on solar power for electricity. Hence, effort should be made to connect this region to national grid.
- □ As the area faces scarcity of water as there is no reliable source of water hence, alternatives for water supply management shall be considered also might be through solar pumping if feasible.
- □ Waste management shall also be considered parallel with development of tourism area as solid wastes produced pollute and damage the natural environment.
- □ It is must that Phikkal tourism master plan be prepared as soon as possible which helps to to linkup different tourist attractions and places of heritage interest in the area.
- □ It is must that detailed project report be prepared as soon as possible which helps to analyse the project components and activities needed for their improvement. The cost estimates helps to collect reliable sources for funding options, helps for stage planning and budged allocation of project components for development of the overall tourism area. The following are the few structures and improvement activities discussed among the team members to be incorporated in detail project report:
 - Construction of well managed traditional stone paved pathway connecting trail routes from Chanaute to Phikkal view tower location, surrounding area connecting Hattidhunga area and Mahakali temple area and also at Rachanetham dada with proper surface drainage facility and railings which facilitates for comfortable hiking activities.
 - Construction of boundry wall / fencing around view tower location, Hattidhunga area, Mahakali temple area and other surrounding area of tourist destination to secure the perimeter.
 - Basic landscaping with paths, benches and sheds at view tower location, Hattidhunga area, Mahakali temple area and other surrounding areas with proper drainage and lighting facility to enhance the beauty of area at all time day and night.
 - Construction of entrance main gate at different locations for indication and attraction of tourism area
 - Construction of picnic spot at bhedikhor can be a good option as cool environment at Phikkal can be the best picnic destination
 - Construction of parks at suitable location within the tourism area for refreshment purpose
 - Environmental protection works including tree plantation.
- Current facilities should be upgraded in order to cater for the needs of the main target groups. The following suggestions can be made in order to improve the current facilities and activities:
 - A well-functioning booking office needs to be set up.
 - Shops selling local arts, refreshments, postcards, other souvenirs can be a good idea.

- The training of locals in the fauna, flora and animal life e.g. birds of area in addition to heritage and history is essential.
- Provide a security guard and maintenance person to monitor and maintain all facilities at view tower and surrounding area.
- It is suggested that enough accommodation be provided in order to accommodate groups. Huts could also have a cooking area inside and be reflective of traditional culture. Persons staying overnight will then have the option of having a traditional meal cooked in their huts by local women at an additional cost. It is suggested that local art work and traditional craft be used to decorate the huts. Campsites might also be a viable option.
- □ Another possibility is to construct a cultural village within Phikkal tourism area, which would be more accessible to tourists and is at less remote. The community must ensure though, that they are offering the product as indigenous traditional villages. Over time, the establishment of a cultural tourism route in the region will be beneficial for Phikkal tourism area.
- □ It is imperative that development should not be too commercialised, blend in with the environment and remain rustic. The rural environment with rustic facilities is part of the appeal to ensure unique and authentic visitor experiences.
- □ The use of traditional and natural construction material and local labor should be perpetuated.
- Investigate other adventure tourism options. Also few options, activities and infrastructure that has been suggested from demand analysis by stakeholders needs detailed feasibility analysis and to be carried out only if feasible for sustainable tourism development in near future can be enlisted as:
 - Rafting along Sunkoshi river
 - Gumba at Majkharka
 - Cultural museum at Phikkal tourism area
 - Botanical research center at Phikkal
 - Agriculture research center at Phikkal
 - Paragliding at Phikkal
 - Jungle safari from Phikkal Rachanetham Chitrenagi
 - Cable car at Phikkal
 - Local FM station at Phikkal for promotion of tourism area
- □ Provision of information board at mid hill highway passing through Phikkal rural municipality can play an important role for promotion of Phikkal tourism area.

CONCLUSION

Phikkal Rural Municipality is blessed with natural and scenic beauty, culture and mystique because of which tourism and its development has been a subject of major concern. It is considered to be one of the powerful developing aspects of rural municipality.

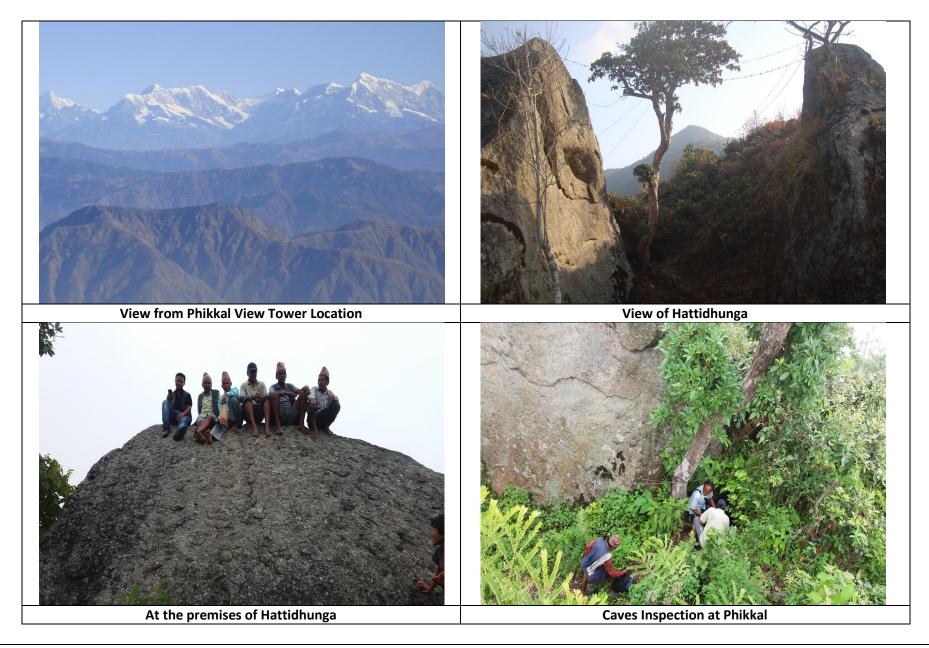
Tourism has an important role to play in uplifting the Nepalese economy. It is therefore, essential to consider all the aspects of tourism development to present Phikkal as the best place to travel, explore and adventure. The lack of sound tourism marketing, planning, processing and research system, Phikkal could not achieve better result in tourism as per its potentiality. The limited funds and scattered marketing activities hardly achieve any desired targets. Due to the government instability and the bureaucratic procedures, tourism was hardly treated as a professional business sector that needs competitive marketing strategy.

The environment pollution and degradation hinder upon the natural beauty. Therefore, the need for a planned tourism development has been realized so that tourism development program could be measurable and achievable. The creation of different institutional arrangement would be helpful for the development of tourism in Phikkal. Local government is a lead player in attracting local tourism, however to be fully effective, councils need to have a good strategic planning policy framework which outlines land use objectives of the rural municipality and identifies tourism precincts or individual sites where tourism development world be supported. This is achieved through planning schemes and associated strategic documents. It would be best to incorporate tourism into the local planning policy framework and economic development strategy which complements planning schemes by providing strategic direction and more detailed local policies on land use issues.

These facts along with findings of field observation revealed that the proposed Phikkal Tourism Area is feasible from technical, environmental and socio-cultural point of view.

Annex 1: Photographs



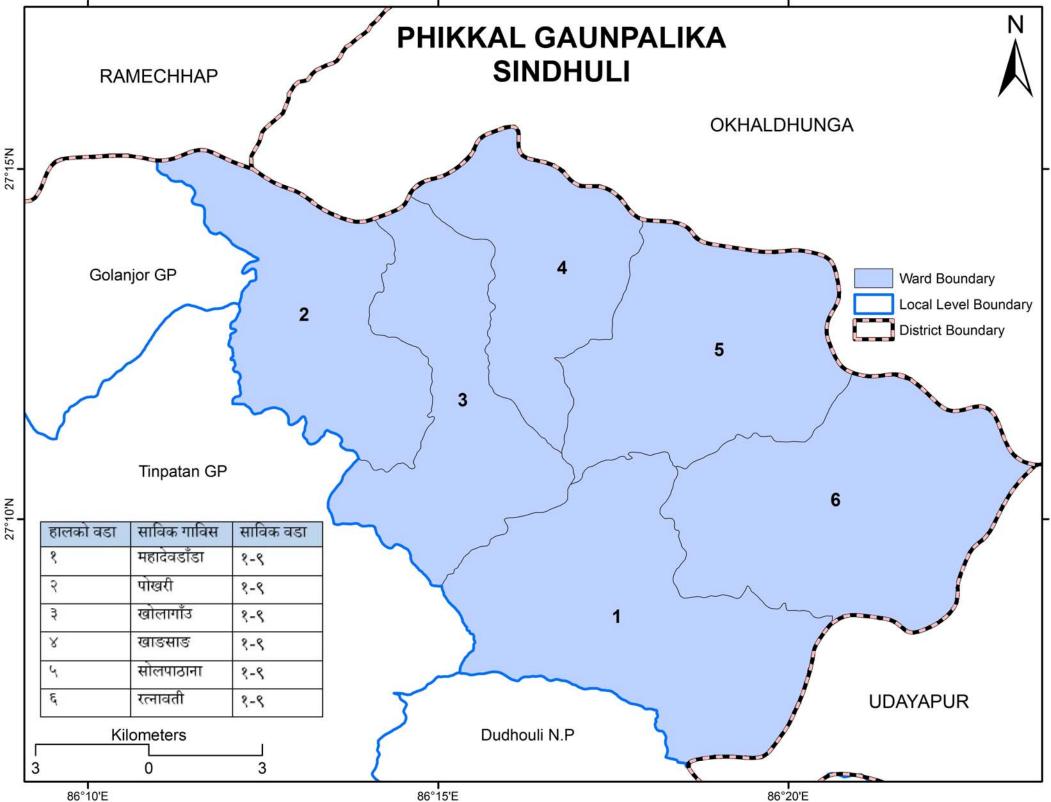


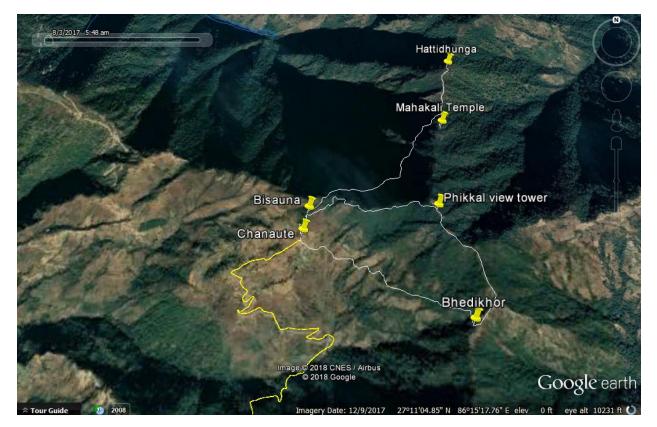






Annex 2: Maps





Google map of Phikkal View Tower Location



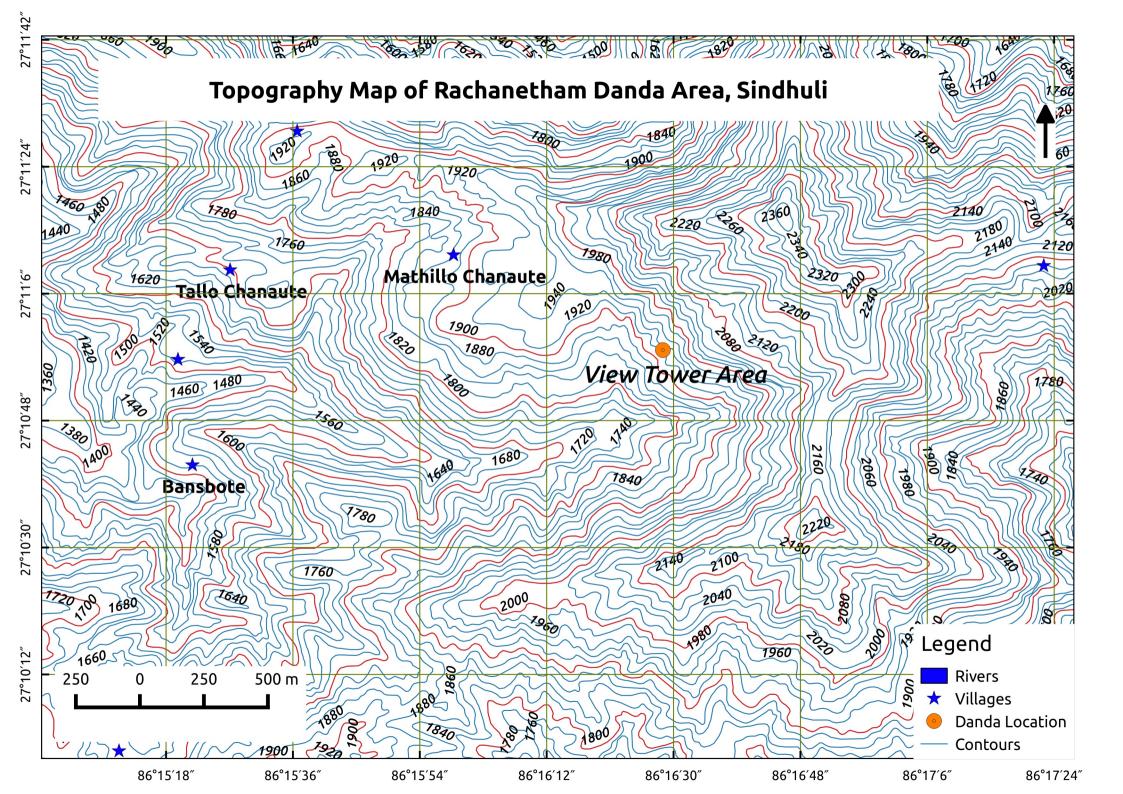
Google map of Rachanetham dada

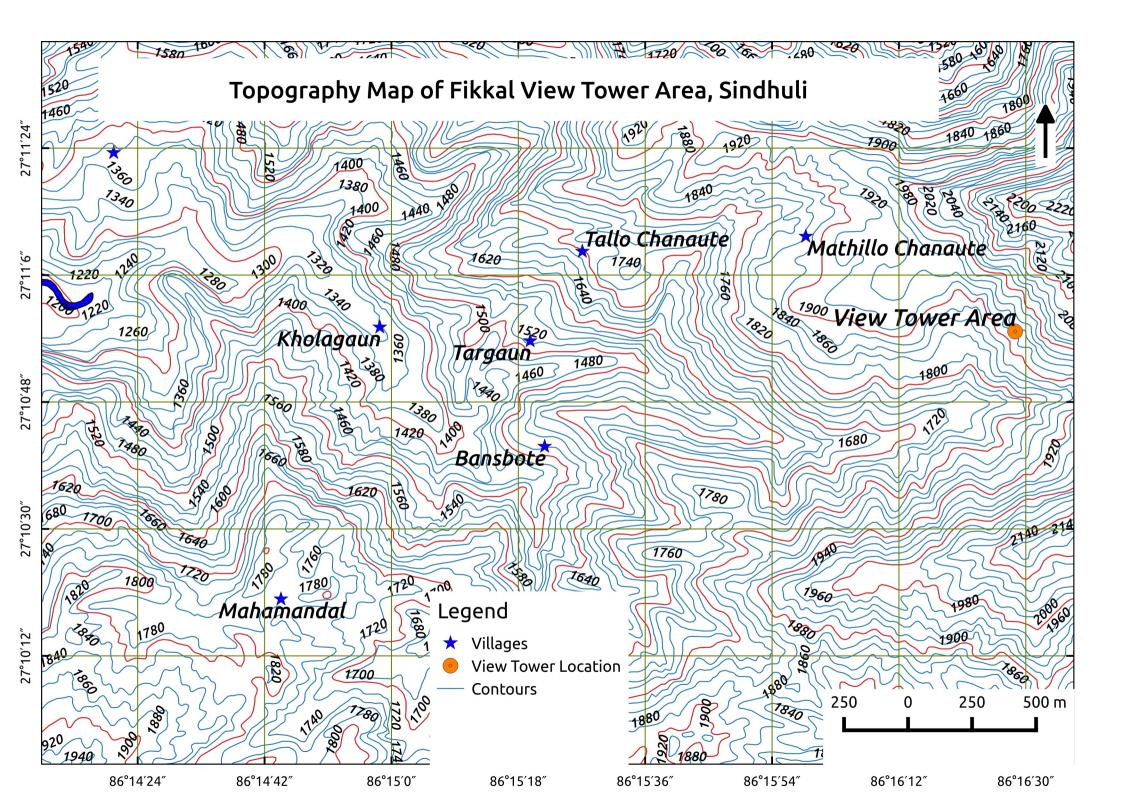


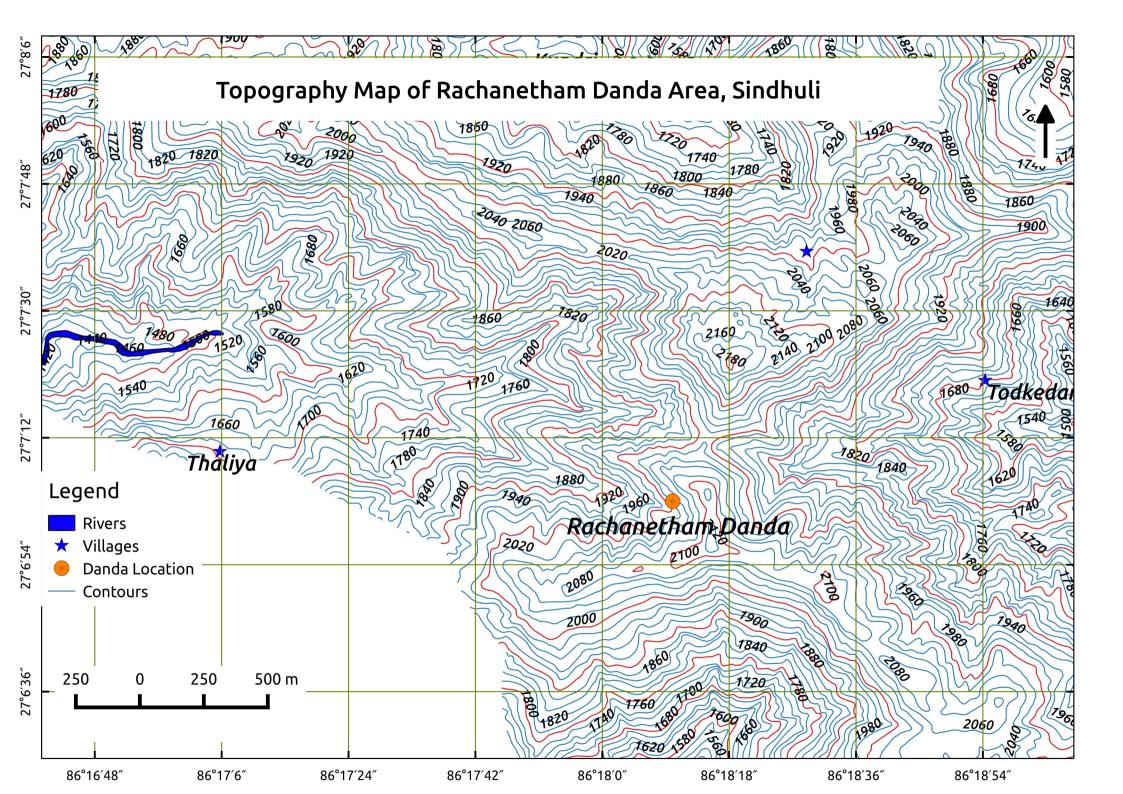
Google map of Chitrenangi Location

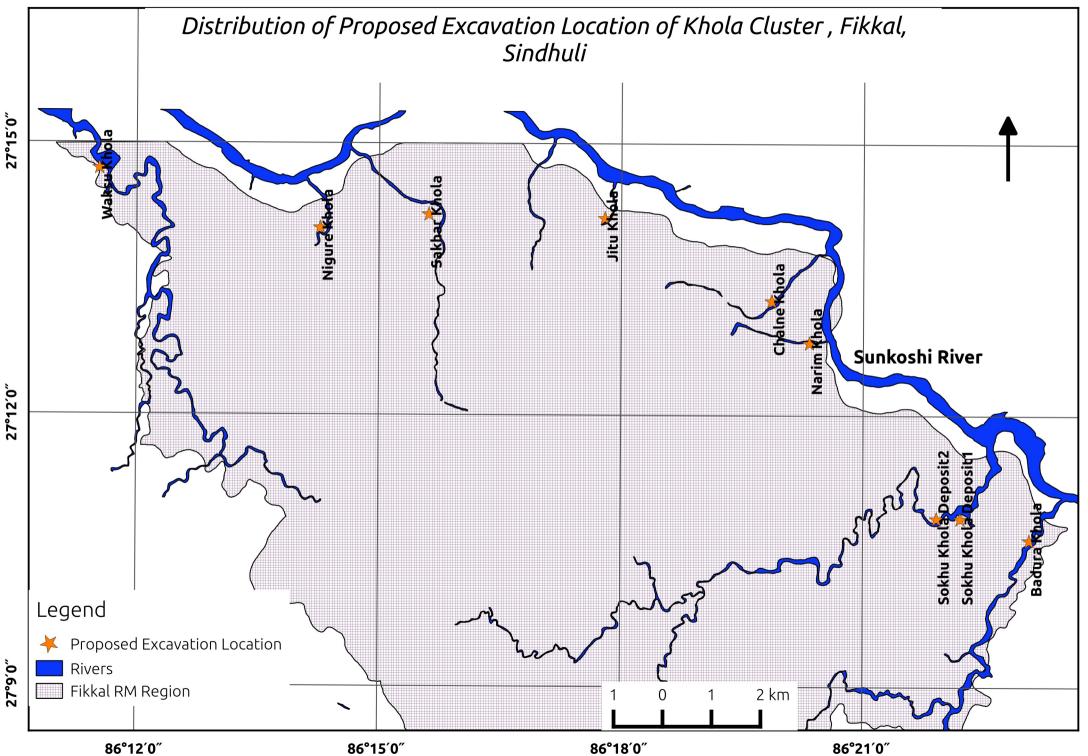


Google map of damar area









Annex 3: Meeting Minutes

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स्यक केन्द्र नेपाली - 19:5. 3 DTATO. 127 JI E Ia Yain 7-3129 De ATT 22 210 da 1920 5 1 el 3 35 7157 2912 -307 LENIAL 24 NEET a there Mgn 26, Mgn 26 Mgn 26 eot की धत व पुतुवा की मिल व मगर डो हिंदे के दिन्दे dinabary 33. -sot Tradi NIHIS, २४० - इने रमन मिन ' में २१. - डाने धीत व मगड १४२ इने हुगी चिन्ही Fa 'as

फिल्केल पर्यहतकी लाजि निर्माण जात आवश्यक रार्यमा द्रमें देहाय त्री जिमका द्वता 9. फिक्छन जोने बारें। मर्मत तथा निर्माहा जादिन TA I 2. सडक निर्माण द्वत अतिमा अने पोर 2. ZIAIZIASI START OURRENA TA Z पिरेखलमा परिक्रमा सरे राउठ निर्माण। ४. 2050 दुद्धियको द्वाप तार सिडियूक्त पैरल मार्ग बगाउन् येन 4. जापा ग्लाइ डिड. रंगाते गा उपसूत भए Zi TITIA HAGA STA I E. राव्टिय प्रयासा लाबर विरुतार गरी केवलवार र मार्य में में 6. फिक्कल महोत्यव जोरी। C. Warder 27 2102 सहितको 204 मलकेन मलाय बोर्ड तयार जारी (हाइ वेमा) राजमार्गमा 21202 5. लालाजारांध महोत्यात 21207 1 90. जडी ब्रिके रहेकलात मदर्शत. २०म मेखे धन 99. रितिहायिक प्रस सांस्कृतिक पडाके रामेश जारे प्रयाद / प्रखाद जार्म । 92. Праголо ЭТЗ & на стера нате это · Sic 1 93. दाल करते स्वोतावार तिकालियको विजुली आर्क्वोट सम्म मुजेबो द व्यसलाई फिलकन लात उपयुत रहेके। 98. कि कर दार्ताट, पाधी आरा, दमार मास्टर्य रोताडांडा, मंडी र्याट जल्ता रखारमा सुन्द नमुगा सरती किस्ताट उन्हे मेरे। १४. जंगला क्रेन्वो हरसाम गर्ने पर्म त्या तार्या जारी हैरालको कावरिया जातू मते।

98. फिक्टनमा स्वानेपानीको व्यवदेशा जन् त्रोट - तत्काल काकार्य प्राप्ती खेवलत जात्र या 96. Winney accurul Amin ante 211AR210 2231 1 १८. जंगलको राक्षरामा रहेका स्वयक्तिनाई कतारमठ कटिङ जरी खुन्स्टता खटेता (राह) हॉआहर मात्र। 93. TUD TAS ZUTZED TURNARTI, TUSNASOT आयागराको डोवस्तर माझ रत्र , लेखडांडा आह रचते थात्र मेडी खोट लाब्टी मज्ज्यांडु, चिन्ने माइर्जेमा निर्माहा रात्रे खर्छिने । 20. - שהוצאו באינאו ברצם אודמי סומניטו जाते मेरी। 29. 2 गिम्बनवी रापुमा बुद्धको मुर्नि राष्ट्र EAGA 1 22. माझ स्वक्रमा छाम्वा निमाल जातु पर्ते। 23. फिक्क्क्स क्षाहती स्तुमा बनाउन मेरी १४. यिडि उक्तीन रक्षानस्तमा प्रतिसालय हुऊ निर्फत मते फेर्ता १४. जातिय मेख भुवा राष्ट्रिको र्यायकतिक रंग्रा लय स्रताउन् गरी। LE. ZALTAB HEIZASIST DISTA. & BLIJZATETTAT रहेको महादेव आमाको रहेरका प्रवृह्त जोर्भ। 26. रतानिक सहोद्वडोंक वडा न'. 6 की भ्याग्रेरेमा रहेके महादेव जाफाको संरक्षार प्रयाह जर्म। 2C. (फिलकलमा टरें को महाकाली देवी के प्रयाश्य 23. तितयम्ब (तारा रवखेका) रत्यातमा तारवाप् जित्ते पहिन्दान उत्ता कित जीते । 20. फिल्फल - ट्यो काम - चित्रे ताशी (जेशल राफारी) यामयाचित्र तन रहेग रामन्त्वय गरी सेवालन गत र्वाहते ।

29. वन्य जर्गको - जोरी चिकरी नियन्त्रग ग 22- जेगलमा -यरियरण कर्य गर्ने फेर्ने। जडीबुटी तथा वनस्पती अख्ययनवेद्व नि 23. गर्न साबते । रन्यने धाममा रवेल मेवात व्यवाद्धित 38. विक्रित खेवालात आर्ने राखिने। २१. सोख्यतामा द्रायाँ मयां नझारेपता जा अप रबोलायों मागवेती द्वारात्र थाप 71 224 1 26. दमार माझ रबढे अंडीरवोरमा ।विश्वेष फ तथा अडीबुटी उनलेंची रवेतीकी प्रवद्य गरी काकि प्राय कि कार गार्त । 86. मजर, मंत्रती वाजा, प्रन्चेवाजा, मजर तामाइ राजेल, उत्तावा परम्परा भत मेवमु रांस्कृतिको संरहात प्रवहेत जर्त सकिते। ३८. फिल्मली एछ एम इ फिल्मल (परणाई दा रथापता तथा रहेगालत जार पते,