

## **Joint Forest Management Rules: Law and Practice in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

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### **Abstract**

*The study's main aim was to provide an in-depth insight into the Community Participation (also called Joint Forest Management or JFM) Rules enforced by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in 2004 to reform the KP Environment Department from a "policing model" to a participatory one. It sought to find out; whether the JFM rules are followed in letter and spirit or the environment department of the province is still using age-old policies without involving the local communities in the management of forests. The study has uncovered the departmental and bureaucratic constraints towards the JFM Rules that stop the department from embarking on a journey towards a more participatory, inclusive, transparent, accountable, and sustainable management as well as development of forest resources. A qualitative research design was selected for this study and data was collected from a sample assembled on quota sampling technique with the quotas of respondents: 10 forest owners (people who have ownership rights in forests. 5 were taken from Malakand Division and 5 from Hazara Division of KP), 10 forest users (people who occasionally or permanently live in or near forests and use its resources in an arrangement with the forest owners. 5 were taken from Malakand and 5 from Hazara again), 10 government officials (5 from the environment department and 5 from the legal fraternity) and finally 10 environmental activists (including 5 female activists). Themes were developed after carrying out semi-structured in-depth interviews using interview guides. One of the major findings of the research were the sweeping and discretionary powers of the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) which hinders the progress of JFM as DFO is not only the final authority on registration of a JFM Committee but can influence various other aspects of community participation and JFM like planning, funding and termination. It was also found that the territorial or protection staff (like Ranger, Forester & Guard) were still calling the shots in a top-down approach instead of a bottom-to-top approach by the mobilization and developmental staff (like Community Development Officer or CDO & Female Forest Extensionist or FFE) despite the JFM Rules. It was revealed that there is a great lack of funds and financial independence of the Directorate of CDEGAD (Community Development, Extension, Gender and Development) which is responsible for implementing community participation and JFM. The directorate staff is mostly financially dependent upon the discretion of the DFO. Even after 16 years, the environment department has not internalized JFM Rules. There was a lack of concern by government top management towards addressing this huge environmental problem of the lack of implementation of JFM despite the recent Billion and 10 Billion Trees "Tsunami" Afforestation Projects with the help of the UN under the Bonn Challenge. A very small number of community members reported that they are participating in the forestry and wildlife activities with the environment department. "Rubber stamp" and "token" participation were reported just to give legal cover to the departmental activities and a photo session for the social media instead of truly real incentive participation to achieve sustainable management and development of forest resources. There is a great if not an organized resistance of the majority of forestry staff to JFM Rules and keep these rules hidden under the carpet to carry on the traditional approach which is harmful for the communities, the department, the forests, and the wildlife in the long run. Lack of implementation of JFM Rules also facilitates corruption. Without local support and knowledge, the poverty in the forest-dependent communities cannot be eradicated. Lessons from Nepal's social forestry should be learned and utilized for KP's JFM. Nevertheless, the recent projects by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf led KP and Federal governments have given environmental activists*

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*a great glimmer of hope but the long-term positive results of it will depend upon its continuity by the future governments. The positions of CDOs, Female CDOs, and SOs (Social Organizers) need to be strengthened with legal powers regarding JFM. Several environmental policy and regulation needs were also identified in this study, followed by several recommendations for the environment department, provincial government, and civil society for bold and ambitious community-led forestry and wildlife conservation projects.*

**Keywords:** Community Participation Rules; Joint Forest Management; Joint Forest Management Rules; JFM Rules; Social Forestry

### **Introduction**

Joint Forest Management (JFM) Rules are a course of actions and SOPs (Standards of Procedures) to conduct social forestry. Social forestry is the participatory and sustainable form of forest administration that marks the mobilization of communities in the protection and promotion of forest resources. These rules are applied through the Directorate of CDEGAD (Community Development, Extension & Gender and Development) and particularly through Community Development Officer (CDO) but its application was described to be halted by the territorial or protection staff like DFOs (Divisional Forest Officers), Forest Rangers, Foresters and Forest Guards etc. These rules are exceptional as they hold with itself opposition attached from the same department for which they were meant to be reformed. JFM Rules can also have a great economic power on the citizen, household, and the community which is tangled with the forests. There are also many widespread misapprehensions involved in social forestry by the forestry staff themselves (Steinmann, 2004).

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the social and cultural constraints that do not permit Community Participation or Joint Forest Management (JFM) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to be followed and being implemented despite being the official policy of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its forest and environmental management.

### **Practical implications**

This study has practical implications for government policy and non-government organizations to focus on public awareness and removing the bureaucratic and departmental resistance attached to social forestry and the sustainable management of forests. Removing the lack of awareness attached to social forestry and organizing communities as well as mobilizing the community through awareness-raising campaigns by involving media as well as other trusted means like clergy, community leaders, and social activists as well as celebrities.

### **Originality/value**

This study stands out from the rest in the literature on forestry as it is the first study to explore and capture the experiences and perceptions towards Community Participation or JFM Laws of Environment Department magnifying the departmental constraints and resistance that prevents them to be implemented which can protect and develop precious forest resources of Pakistan. Moreover, it is the first study on the departmental constraints on JFM Rules and social forestry laws in the provincial context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### **History of Joint Forest Management Rules**

Experts believe that the field of social forestry or the application of community participation began in the Post-World War II era even though Switzerland had informal social forestry for centuries (Batten, 1957). It became quite popular in the Anglophone countries after the Second World War (Cary, 1973). It also replicated in the Third World countries of the former British Empire nations. Some of the earliest thinkers of this participatory approach were Robert Owen from Wales, William Lane from Australia, and finally S.D. Alinsky from the USA (Cawley, 1989). It began as the community participation approach found success in the education sector of the British African Empire and was subsequently extended to forestry (Sanders, 1970).

The modern trend of participatory approach in the forestry sector called social forestry gathered momentum in the 70s around the world and reached the Asian countries like Nepal, India, South Korea and Indonesia etc. (Anderson & Fishwick, 1984). In 1978 it was coined as "Community Forestry" by FAO (Food and Agricultural Organization). The UN also realized the potential of social forestry and the 'Tbilisi Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education' was held later in the same year. Four years later, UNESCO also recognized it (Leach & Mearns 1988; Berger & Ruth, 1992).

In Pakistan, a protection model was inherited from the British Raj who had no incentive in empowering the local community to be a colonial power. The former NWFP took the initiative in the field of social forestry by beginning Village Planning as early as 1987. However, the rules under study were formulated in 2004 (Steinmann, 2004).

***Methodology of JFM Rules***

The main aim of Joint Forest Management as explained in the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Community Participation Rules or JFM Rules 2004 is to make combined efforts with villagers to do sustainable management of the forests. A Directorate within the Environment Department has been set up to mobilize Forest staff and forest communities to participate in JFM - The Directorate of Community Development, Extension, Gender and Development (CDEGAD). CDEGAD appoints and trains Community Development Officers or CDOs (BPS-16), Social Organizers or SOs (BPS-15), and Female Forest Extensionists or FFEs (BPS-11) who work with forestry staff and helps them to mobilize and create community organizations according to JFM Rules and are called VDCs or Village Development Committees, JFMCs or Joint Forest Management Committees, WOs or Women Organizations as well as AMCs or Audit and Monitoring Committees.

The main job of these community organizations/institutions is what is called the Village Planning in the JFM Rules. It is finalized after meeting in the presence of CDO and other forestry staff like DFO (Divisional Forest Officer), Forest Rangers, Foresters and Forest Guards etc. It is done to plan forest activities as well as allocate forestry funds for the sustainable development of forest resources within the community. It is often called a JFM Plan when it is done with Forest owners and users. JFMCs also have the power of creating community check posts.

The composition of JFMCs, VDCs, or WOs is of about 12 to 15 members and may include sub-committees for particular purposes. These Committees are headed by Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons who are to be elected and are usually forest owners as well as have a good rapport with the Forest Department. The Secretaries of the Committees call the meetings, set agendas, and keep records. Each committee has a Finance Secretary or Treasurer has to manage the joint account of the committees and look after other financial matters. 5-7 members of a JFMC have to be forest owners representing different Khel's or villages who have concessional rights over forests a part of a couple of forest users. 2 stakeholders from the NGOs. Each JFMC and VDC also includes 2 concerned Forest Department officials. Each JFMC includes an elected member of local government as well as a representative of a neighboring VDC. However, the final authority of a committee's registration and approval of their decisions rests with the DFO (JFM Rules, 2004).

***Common Misconceptions about JFM by Forest Department territorial staff***

There are many misunderstandings about JFM held by the territorial staff of the Environment Department. Some of the common misinformation cited by a study also verified this:

- That it can take away all authority from the department to the community organizations.
- That it can remove monetary benefits to the already underpaid staff.
- That community organizations are lazy, non-technical, and corrupt and therefore JFM will lead to a disaster (Basit, 2017).

***Economic benefit of participatory approach***

It has been demonstrated by repeated studies into forestry as well as wildlife that effective and informed true participation from the department positively impacts forest protection as well as forest development in nations that follow this approach. It has been observed that local responsibility and knowledge coupled with government or NGO oversight as well as expertise and technical-cum-legal support. Public expenditures which are spent on protection are not only saved but also a great amount of revenue is locally generated creating income resources and jobs for the community (Agarwal, 2007; Booth, 1996).

***Previous studies in related areas***

A study found that without proper community organization and a sustainable approach, a tragedy of the commons happens whereby destruction of forests is accelerated unabated (Anderson & Fishwick, 1984).

There are different levels of community participation with rubber stamp participation of merely token representation just to sign or agree to already decided policies come at the bottom of the "Ladder of Citizen Participation". On the other hand community self-autonomy is the highest form of community involvement (Arnstein, 1969).

A study found out that community participation plays a big role in improving forest protection as well as its sustainable development. It also ensures the colonial mentality of the staff in favor of public service. However, he criticized the lack of facilities and legal financial welfare given to the Forest officials (Basit, 2017).

An inquiry about the history of social forestry also revealed that in Pakistan, real community participation has been non-existent except for a few success stories in the Northern areas of Pakistan (Baig, Ahmed, Khan & Straquadine, 2008).

Another study suggested that civic entrepreneurship is needed for Pakistani communities' especially rural communities for sustainable development (Banuri, Najam & Odeh, 2002).

A research stated that a step towards sustainable development and obedience as well as the respect of environmental laws starts with changing behavior through training and participatory approach (Booth, 1996).

A team of researchers believed that one should expect responsible behavior from the community and they will be responsible in their approach and behavior regarding environmental management and protection (Berger and Ruth, 1992).

A study conducted in Mexico believed that political empowerment for the community is necessary for the sustainable conservation and development of forest resources as well as deriving maximum benefit from social forestry (Boyer, 2015).

Another study also connected community development and participation with the politics of decentralization and issues of local government. He argues for the greater autonomy of local communities especially rural communities (Burns, 1994).

One researcher believed that community development is a continuous process that self-corrects itself over time (Carey, 1973).

#### **The current study**

The purpose of this study was to record, understand, and evaluate the gap between the law and implementation of Community Participation Rules. It also ventured into finding out the constraints which halt the progress of institutionalization of JFM Rules. It also dug out not only the causes but also the solution of issues related to the lack of implementation of JFM by the Environment Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The main guiding research question of this research study thus was: What are the socio-cultural, political, bureaucratic, departmental, and technical causes of the lack of execution of JFM Rules and what steps are necessary to reform the current laws, organizational structure and implement the philosophy of JFM.

#### **Method**

Social research in the field of law can be done by three broad types of methods, i.e., qualitative research method unveiling numerical data, quantitative method revealing descriptive findings, and finally a combination of the former two called mixed methods research utilizing both numerical analysis and thematic explanation. The design is based on cross-sectional techniques. Complex socio-cultural issues are usually researched with a qualitative research method that utilizes themes to explain the findings of the study (Bryman, 2004). Therefore, a qualitative research method was utilized in the current study. As the researchers needed to collect data from a variety of social strata and categories, they decided to employ the quota sampling technique. The qualitative research selected 40 respondents/participants recruited from the following quotas:

- forest users (10),
- forest owners (10),
- forest officials (5),
- lawyers and judges (5),
- male environmental activists (5) and
- female activists (5).

Half of the forest users and owners were from the Malakand Division of KP whereas the other half were recruited from Hazara Division. All other 20 respondents were selected from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The in-depth interview method was implemented. A total of 40 qualitative in-depth conversational (unstructured) interviews were conducted and then the responses were recorded and analyzed. The collected data was codified and analyzed in thematic style.

***In-depth Conversational Interviews***

40 participants (10 forest owners, 10 forest users, 5 environment department officials and 5 legal experts, and 10 environmental activists) were selected via quota sampling for data collection. 40 qualitative in-depth and unstructured conversational interviews were conducted collecting qualitative information from the respondents to record their anecdotes about their first-hand and unique knowledge and experiences regarding community participation in forestry as well as JFM.

***Data analysis (thematic approach)***

In the first part of the qualitative data analysis, 40 guided in-depth interviews were conducted and transcribed which were verified from the interviewees after recording with ethics of social and legal research kept in mind as prescribed by Maykut and Morehouse (1994). The interview transcript was then coded with the initial inductive class coding and a sense was made of the data collected by dividing the raw data into rough categories of similar and related patterns of information called themes (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). As per SOPs, in the second stage of inductive analysis, the researchers compared the transcript and the themes and combined as well as refined the themes. In the last stage, the thematic findings were given final shape by including only relevant anecdotes which gave a sense of the ideas or concepts presented by the thematic titles (Patton, 2002).

***Findings***

The qualitative data analysis of the interviews gathered from the 40 interviewees produced some intriguing findings about the gaps between the law and practice of JFM Rules 2004. The information presented below is presented in the form of themes with the help of the description of the phenomenon and relevant anecdotes:

***Lack of public awareness about social forestry***

Most of the respondents expressed that in Pakistani society even in the educated class, there is a general lack of awareness about social forestry and the importance of community participation in the management of forest resources. It was also observed that there is no material taught in the schools regarding social forestry in the compulsory education system of Pakistan. This negatively affects the application of JFM Rules as one respondent revealed:

"... I have never come across any educational material in the public or private schools or even the schools with lessons of social forestry nor I have watched any program on the mainstream media regarding recent success stories recognized even on the international level... There is little focus on social forestry in the application side of things in the PFI (Pakistan Forest Institute) as no matter how much technical knowledge you have, you cannot save forests if the community is not sensitized... Even in the social sciences departments like Sociology and Social Work etc., there is a lack of a specialized course on Environmental Sociology or Social Forestry..."

***Lack of academic and professional training regarding JFM Rules***

Many participants also acknowledged that other than the general population, the concerned officials such as the DFOs, Rangers, Foresters, Forest Guards, the honorable judges (especially in the forested districts of Malakand and Hazara Divisions, etc.), the lawyer community, and the security agencies such as the police have a lack of proper training regarding JFM Rules. This factor was reported to be also responsible for the lack of implementation of JFM Rules. One participant shared:

"... We as employees of this Department have to repeatedly face the same problem again and again that we do not know anything about JFM Rules. We do have a CDO but he has never given us training to the staff. Generally, the staff think that JFMCs are taking away their power. The lawyers are not even aware of JFM Rules and Judges do not know about it either although I heard from CDO that it is the law but the ultimate authority rests with the DFO... Judges should be sensitized about social forestry and they should be very strict about punishments of forest offenders..."

***Overriding powers of DFO***

Many participants stated that most of the DFOs are traditional-minded in the Environment Department and not open to accepting or patronizing JFM Rules. DFOs or any other officers in the bureaucracy in Pakistan generally consider their office as their domain and do not entertain outside interference. They think that JFM Rules will lead to outside interference and be a threat to their power. This results in the non-registration of JFMCs. One participant noted:

"... At the start of posting a new officer called CDO, I thought that now Jirgas and Public Forums will be empowered by the Forest Department but on the contrary despite our attempts for 2 years... DFO did not register a single JFMC despite our repeated attempts and by following all the rules of JFMC... There is always suspicion of giving away power by the govt officials in regards to community participation."

***Low salaries of Environment Department officials***

It was also revealed almost all the respondents especially the government officials complained that they have great expenses especially after record inflation in recent times and their low salaries cannot let their ends meet and they are always handed to mouth. In a situation to be so broad-minded as to open public scrutiny to our office will decrease the extra money forestry officials make through corruption will end. Therefore, the Environment Department as a whole is against JFM Rules and is ignoring them. One participant said:

"... Only my office mates know about my low salary and even we try to hide it from our families... if people find out about my salary, they will laugh at us and not respect us anymore... In such a situation, we try to earn extra money through various illegal but normal activities such as taking bribes in passing files, local quota of timber, timber auction and passage through check post etc."

***Antagonism by Environment Department's Territorial Staff***

Some participants revealed that even though some territorial staff such as DFOs, Rangers, Foresters, and Forest Guards are actively working against JFM Rules and to undermine the CDEGAD staff. The researchers were told that there is great discrimination against CDEGAD staff and they are not considered or accepted as forestry officials by some sections of the department especially the territorial staff. The CDEGAD staff have a sense of inferiority due to maltreatment by some territorial officials. As one participant put it:

"... Several territorial forestry officials who I interacted with are absolutely against the CDEGAD staff and they are actively plotting against them here at Forestry Department. They only have the support of clerical staff or community in their work as they are more social but the territorial staff are mostly against JFM Rules. Although there are some good guys too and they want forests to be protected by the communities themselves, many do not consider CDEGAD competent or part of the forestry department..."

***Lack of powers with CDOs***

The respondents who were aware of the position of CDO said that although the appointment of CDOs gave them some hope but there was a lack of powers with CDOs to carry out their functions such as having no power of mobility and registration. They are like puppets of the DFO. They wanted to see a CDO who is powerful enough to carry out his or her functions. This will remove obstacles to JFM Rules. As one respondent said:

"... I'm suffering some psychological problems and some other financial problems being an employee of CDEGAD. Most officials of CDEGAD are under depression... Some are even in need of regular psychological counseling and treatment as well... We are looking to find another job and start a business as we have not only low grades and under-paid salaries but also go through humiliating scenarios and inhumane treatment in our department..."

***Lack of funds with CDEGAD***

It was reported from the interview data provided by the participants who were aware about CDEGAD that they are not receiving funds, standard facilities which causes non-implementation of JFM Rules as well as puts social forestry on a back foot. For instance, one participant narrated:

"... There is a lack of funds and facilities for the CDEGAD staff. The staff of CDEGAD cannot even move around without the permission of the DFO who is the ultimate boss in a top-down model... Social forestry can be expensive but it will refund the Forestry Department in the long run..."

***Upgradation of CDO to BPS-17***

Most of the participants expressed great faith and confidence in CDO if they are promoted to BPS-17, their performance regarding JFM Rules will increase. Currently, many admitted that they are focusing on getting some other job or doing some part-time job as their current job is unsatisfactory. CDEGAD staff complained of lack of facilities and funds due to lack of service structure. Most of them were

certain that if there is enough motivation and empowerment then they can empower the communities to carry out the protection of forests through the people themselves. For example, one participant added:

“... I don’t have any doubts about the effectiveness of the CDO, and I am pretty sure that if they are given a service structure, they will help even more in carrying out JFM if they are given what they need like support and better facilities...”

***Lack of sensitization of judiciary "empirical-based:***

Another very interesting theme that emerged from the interview data was the need for sensitization of the judiciary especially of the session courts judges, public prosecutors, and the officers who hold magistrate powers in the forested districts of KP like Malakand Division and Hazara Division. This way they can set precedents for the punishment and reward based on JFM Rules. Involvement of judiciary will be a great step for the sustainable management and protection of forests as well as provide legal cover for community organizations involved in JFM such as JFMCs, Village Plans, and Community Check Posts. It will increase reporting of violation of JFM Rules as one civil society member stressed upon this proposition by saying:

"... The Directorates of CDEGAD and HRD (Human Resource Development) in the Environment Department should conduct workshops for the members of the judiciary including the honorable judges, public prosecutors, and lawyers' communities to provide an opportunity to them to get themselves familiarized with JFM Rules to internalize and set pro-social forestry and sustainable approach legal precedents for real protection and development of forests through the rule of law..."

***Lack of NGOs' focus on JFM***

There was an urgent need to provide civic support to social forestry by NGOs, especially those working in the environmental sector. Civil society organizations working to stop environmental degradation and fighting against global warming should unite and concentrate their efforts to become contributing actors in the field of social forestry in the communities and the society. They should not only be legally integrated in JFMCs but also given district and provincial level platforms to engage in social forestry in liaison with the KP Government in the future. As one participant argued:

"... the most important requirement of JFM is to involve already leading community organizations to be involved in social forestry... their technical support, funding, ideas, involvement and human resource will provide an extra impetus to social forestry in KP..."

***Lack of mobility to CDEGAD staff***

Another intriguing theme that emerged was the need for mobility of CDEGAD staff. Visiting communities especially remote and rural communities is a very important part of community mobilization. Even CDOs lack any legally sanctioned and funded transport for their mobilization and community organization activities. An activist revealed:

"...The CDO in our Forest Division does not have any official transport nor is he provided with any expenses by the department to use public transport or hire vehicles for his official duties. Often the CDO asks the VDCs and JFMCs or influential social figures for transport which is not a good practice. The CDO should be independent from asking such favors from the public as it will hamper his ability to be neutral in community meetings..."

***Lack of staff with CDEGAD***

Due to lack of staff in the CDEGAD especially FFEs, Social Organizers, drivers, office assistants, female CDOs, Assistant Directors, promoted Deputy Director, and Director, the CDEGAD is facing difficulties in reaching every part of the province especially the remote areas. One respondent said that:

"... There is a lack of CDOs and female staff in many remote areas of KP... The Directorial posts of CDEGAD are also lying vacant due to lack of service structure... women usually do not find this sort of job attractive, many staff are leaving the Directorate. The government should reform and fill up CDEGAD before it's too late to save the forests of KP..."

***Teaching of JFM to law students***

Some of the participants stressed the need for awareness about JFM Rules and environment protection laws to the LLB students. Some of them suggested that no LLB students are aware of JFM Rules and these rules should be included in the course of LLB students and a semester should have a subject called environmental law, the course contents should include JFM Rules of KP Environment Department. A participant said:

“... Many problems concerning the environmental laws including the JFM Rules at least in the future will subside if there is environmental law included in the course of LLB including JFM Rules... As a future responsible student, they should be aware about the JFM...”

***Corruption***

Corruption has also stopped JFM Rules to be applied as it involves the public in the dealings of the Environment Department which is a direct deterrent of corruption and ensures transparency as well as accountability by the public in the form of VDCs, AMCs, and JFMCS as one respondent explained:

“... Many corrupt officials do not like JFM Rules as it is the best deterrent against corruption, the culture of secrecy, elitism, top-down approach, token participation, central planning and public exclusion... the more the community is informed and involved, the less there will be opportunities for corruption by public officials ...”

***Compulsory MoUs between Environment Department and other departments of KP***

Many participants revealed that although there were MoUs signed between the Education and Environment Department but other departments such as the Army, KP Police, judiciary, local government, and agriculture etc should be taken on board to have a combined effort to conserve our forest reserves. One participant elaborated:

"... Many MoUs were signed between the Forest Department and other institutions but it mostly involved the high ups and did not fully sensitize the staff of that organization such as teachers and students. There is also a need to involve the judiciary and police in this drive... Involvement of army in such an activity will be appreciated by the people of KP... "

***Conclusion***

The thematic findings of the research align with Burns (1994) who also advocated for legal cover and transfer of power to the grassroots level which should also be tried in Pakistan especially in KP. This study also complements the findings about social forestry's main obstacles by Boyer (2015). The findings are also in congruence with Booth (1996) which testify that socio-cultural values and norms regarding forestry and behavior of people about the environment needs to be changed. This study is also in unison with Berger & Ruth (1992) as it blamed trust issues and lack of awareness for the lack of sustainable management of forests. It also testifies the findings of Banuri, Najam, and Odeh (2002) which showed a lack of public awareness about entrepreneurship to contribute to the economic development of the country.

Some very interesting findings emerged from the qualitative data collected and presented in the form of themes. Findings revealed that almost all of the participants agreed and perceived community participation as the biggest factor in the development and protection of forest resources and managing the environment sustainably in KP, Pakistan. JFM is very important for the sustainable management of forestry projects and programs as well as the growth of KP's forest resources. The ultimate goal of the JFM Rules is to change the human behavior of communities and the general society towards social forestry and a participatory approach towards forest conservation.

Legal powers of the CDO should be increased regarding the enforcement of JFM Rules and the discretionary powers of the DFO regarding it should be removed.

Most of the participants expressed the need for public awareness regarding community participation in general especially regarding the protection and promotion of forestry and to remove the bureaucratic and socio-political around it which will allow more forests to be saved.

A gradual change towards social forestry can be achieved by the KP Environment Department due to the recent successful completion of the Billion Trees Afforestation Project (BTAP). The current government has shown the will to support afforestation but now there is a dire need for a sustainable growth of forest reserves and that can also be possible due to social forestry and with

involvement as well as awareness-raising among the communities regarding the sustainable development of forests and green cover. The Green Pakistan project launched by the federal government in Islamabad to plant 10 Billion Trees can only be a long term success if there is implementation of JFM Rules in KP and similar laws in other provinces of Pakistan.

Misconceptions and myths about social forestry among the territorial staff of the Environment need to be removed. also causes a lack of reporting. A culture of secrecy among the public sectors of Pakistan is also responsible for the non-implementation of the JFM Rules.

Pashtun cultural and societal values of mutual consultation including '*jirgas*' should be incorporated into the Green Pakistan project and JFM Rules.

Cooperation between KP Environment and other departments such as Education, Police, and Judiciary is necessary for a long-term change in people's behavior regarding social forestry and encouraging JFM Rules.

JFM Rules might forever remove or at least reduce corruption in the Environment Department as well as improve its public image.

Some recommendations suggested by the researchers are:

- There is a dire need for improved facilities for CDEGAD to facilitate JFM Rules. Social support should be garnered from the NGOs to make them contributing members of JFM.
- Implementation of JFM Rules as well as MoUs with other public departments like Education, Judiciary and Army further improve the faith of the public in the credibility of the Environment Department and thus the KP Government as a whole.
- Increase in salaries of the Environment Department employees to discourage corruption and encourage JFM Rules especially of CDOs, Foresters and Forest Guard.
- Training of Territorial Forestry staff, police, NGOs, and judiciary about social forestry.
- Making JFMCs compulsory in each Forest Division especially by rewarding those DFOs and his team financially who do so.
- Reforming the current organizational structure of the Environment Department by strengthening the Directorate of CDEGAD to carry out JFM Rules.
- Village Planning should be encouraged by financially rewarding the VDCs and JFMCs as well as the forestry staff who help carry it out and create success stories.

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