



Sun drying of Lokta Lokta seedling

# Enhancement of Sustainable Production of Lokta Handmade Paper in Nepal (ESPLHP)



## The Challenge

Handmade paper is a traditional craft product in Nepal by SMEs in the rural mountains, using a plant called lokta. The major part of the population has very limited resources and employment possibilities. The sector has a significant economic and poverty reduction potential given that 90% of the handmade paper and products produced in Nepal are exported. The inefficient resource extraction and production processes, however, do not allow farmers and entrepreneurs to exploit the full economic potential.

The programme faces the challenge of

- Lack of proper collection of Lokta bark
- Lack of use of incomplete method of papermaking
- SMEs unaware of waste water pollution they produce
- Sustaining quality and availability of market

## The Path to Improvements

- Develop & establish a system of Lokta Forest Management with concerned stakeholders;
- Assist in following a practice a proper method of producing quality paper by micro-enterprises;
- Training workshop for SMEs (product makers in Kathmandu) for maximization of inputs utilization;
- Training for SMEs for conceptualizing the designs & sustaining quality & quality management;
- Selection of appropriate methods of waste water management (for MUs) & encourage SMEs to establish waste water treatment plants;
- Promote concept of buyer seller meetings in Nepal;
- Participation in trade fairs and establish links between the buyers and SMEs.

## In a Nutshell

The SWITCH-Asia project of Nepal Handmade Paper Association (HANDPASS, "Enhancement of Sustainable Production of Lokta Handmade Paper in Nepal (ESPLHP)) aims to establish system/s of forest management and marketing of paper in favour of MUs and SMEs of handmade paper sector in Nepal.

Lokta Plant is a shrub grows at an altitude of 2000 meter to 4000 meter in most coniferous forest in Nepal. Lokta paper is made from the inner bark of this shrub. In this sector more than 170 enterprises are currently engaged in paper production in different part of the country and providing employment opportunities to 55,000 families where 80% women are getting working opportunity .

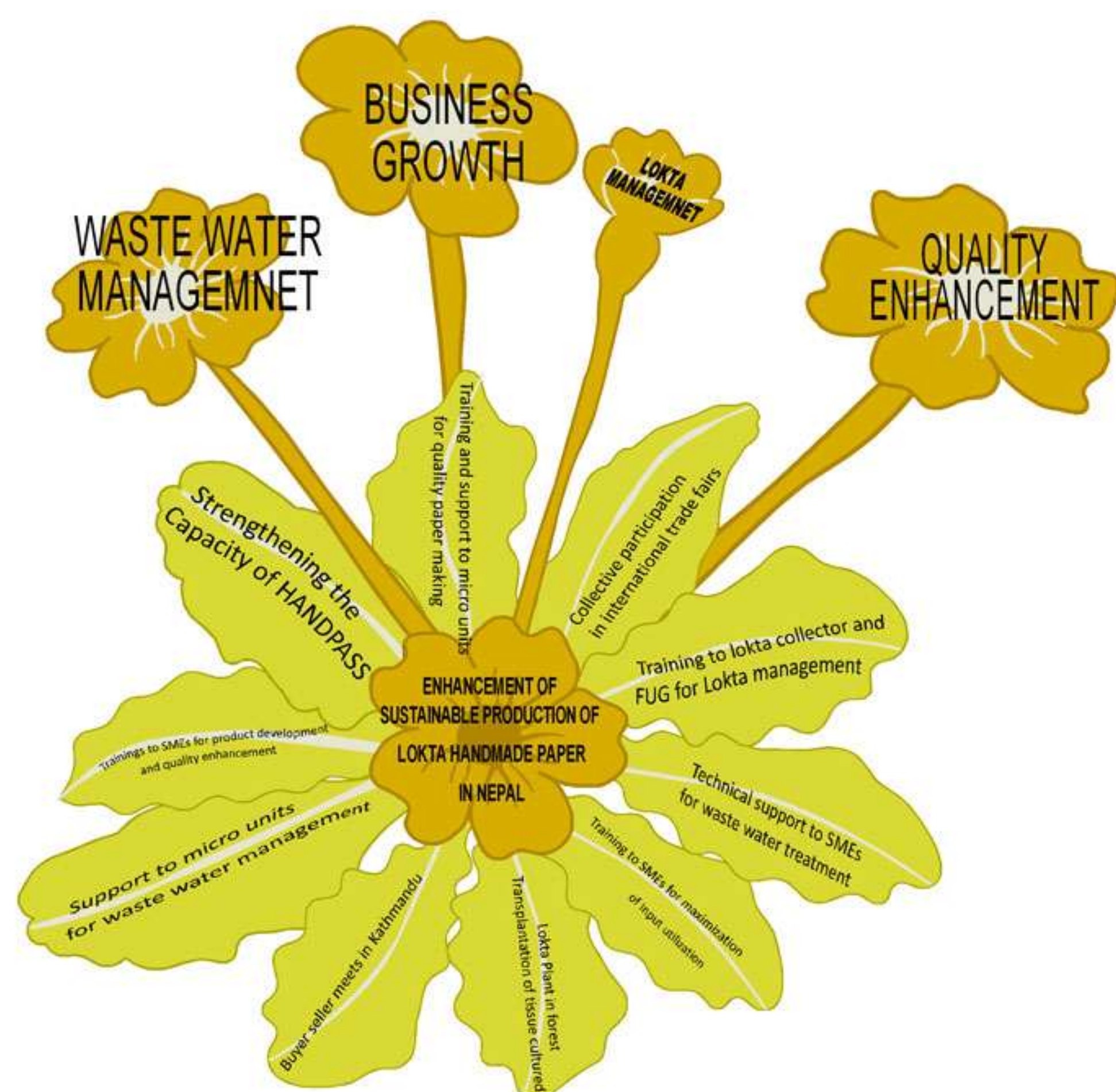
Activities of the program will be focused in promoting a sustainable system of forest management, environment friendly technologies in hand made paper production. The activities of the project will be made effectively in entire value chain of this sector. Apart from support to the farmers this project has also focused in several activities like a proper harvesting technique of Lokta, reduction of waste water pollution in paper dyeing process, improving product development and quality enhancement. In addition to this other activities are to strengthen association, participation in international trade fairs and organizing buyer seller meet in Nepal and Europe

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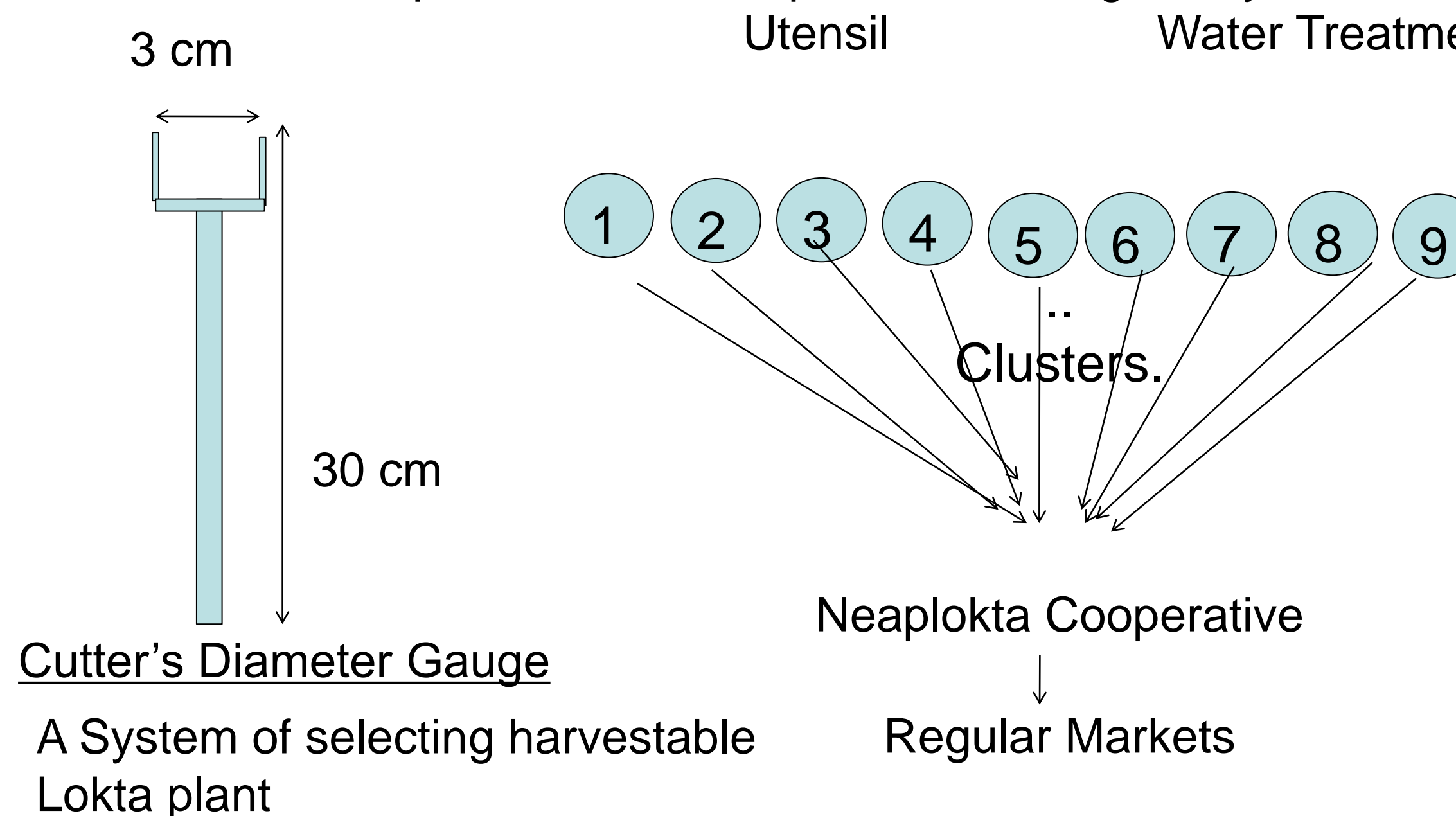
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## The Project and its Objectives

- To increase the cost efficiency of handmade paper & products, thus improving the economic situation of marginalised farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs;
- To address the social and environmental challenges associated with the paper production;
- To promote the adoption of a proper method of extracting *lokta* and *making paper*;
- To minimise water pollution;
- To develop the market for *lokta paper* by *making the paper* sector more sustainable;
- To strengthen the Nepal Handmade Paper Association.



Improved Stove Improved Cooking Utensil A system of Waste Water Treatment



## The Outreach Strategy

The project would make production of Lokta paper and its product a sustainable economic activity, thus reducing the social and environmental challenges associated with the production of paper and paper product and to increase the earning of the marginalised farmers and small scale entrepreneurs. The project is spread over 22 districts (Lokta is available in 57 mountain districts) uniformly spread all over the mountains of the country. Awareness, strengthening and networking of Lokta collectors, Forest User Groups and SMEs for a sustainable production of raw materials and lokta products and an established link between the SMEs and international buyers are the major strategy of the project

