



# Women, Energy and Water in the Himalayas

Integration of Women in Planning and Management  
Policy Guidelines



Bikash Sharma  
Kamal Banskota  
Samira Luitel

# About the Organisations

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**Bikash Sharma  
Kamal Banskota  
Samira Luitel**

**United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)  
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**Rosemary A. Thapa** (Consultant Editor)

**A. Beatrice Murray** (Senior Editor)

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United Nations Environment Programme  
P.O. Box 30552  
Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel: 254 20 1234  
Fax: 254 20 623927  
Email: [cpinfo@unep.org](mailto:cpinfo@unep.org)  
Web: <http://www.unep.org>

International Centre for  
Integrated Mountain Development  
P.O. Box 3226  
Kathmandu, Nepal  
Tel: + 977 1 5525313  
Fax: + 977 1 5524509 / 5536747  
Email: [distri@icimod.org](mailto:distri@icimod.org)  
Web: <http://www.icimod.org>

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# Foreword

# Acknowledgements

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

AEPC	Alternative Energy Promotion Centre
CBO	community-based organisation
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CRT/N	Center for Rural Technology, Nepal
CSD	Commission for Sustainable Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDC	district development committee
DEEP	Society for Development and Environmental Protection
DEPI	Division of Environmental Policy Implementation
EIA	environmental impact assessment
GAD	gender and development
HKH	Hindu Kush-Himalayas
HOPE	Himalaya Organisation for Protecting Environment
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICS	improved cooking stove
ICWE	International Conference on Water and the Environment
IGAs	income generating activities
INGO	international non-government organisation
IWEP	Integrated Water and Energy Programme
IWM	integrated water management
LPG	liquefied petroleum gas
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFIs	micro-finance institutions
NFE	non-formal education
NGO	non-government organisation
NWAB	National Women's Association of Bhutan
O&M	operation and maintenance
PRA	participatory rural appraisal

R&D	research and development
REDP	Rural Energy Development Programme
RETs	renewable energy technologies
RSPN	Royal Society for the Protection of Nature
SIDA	Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency
SOLVE	Society for Local Volunteer Effort
TDV	technology demonstration village
TERI	The Energy and Resources Institute
ToT	training of trainers
UNCED	UN Conference on Environment and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
VDC	village development committee
VDP	village development programme
W&E	water and energy
WECS	Water and Energy Commission Secretariat
WED	women, environment, and development
WHO	World Health Organisation
WID	women in development
WWDR	World Water Development Report



# Glossary

**Basic needs approach:** Projects and programmes targeted to meet practical needs, on the basis that women need to have their basic living requirements fulfilled before they can participate in development activities.

**Efficiency approach:** The mainstreaming or integration of gender aspects into projects in order to maximise project efficiency. The purpose is not especially to benefit women, or change the status quo, rather the approach argues that project planners need to understand the differences between men's and women's needs, wants, potentials, and constraints in order to maximise project efficiency.

**Empowerment approach:** Policies and programmes to meet strategic needs, i.e., education, legal, and political rights, and women's use of these; also mobility, and the self-confidence of women.

**Energy services:** These include lighting, cooking, heating and cooling, pumping, water sterilisation, refrigeration, transportation, communication, and power for productive purposes.

**Equity approach:** This was essentially a political movement, stimulated mainly by developments in the USA in the 1970s (anti-discrimination in job opportunities, equal pay for equal work, etc). It is based on the idea that women should participate equally with men in everything, thus they should be 'mainstreamed' in all projects. Also, the equity principle stresses the need to meet women's strategic needs as well as their practical ones.

**GAD:** The GAD (or 'gender and development') approach focuses on the socially constructed basis of differences between men and women and emphasises the need to challenge existing gender roles and relations.

**Gender analysis:** The systematic gathering and examination of information on gender differences and social relations in order to identify, understand, and redress inequities based on gender.

**Gender awareness:** The ability of persons or policies to understand the implications of a particular programme, project, or policy for both men and women, and to plan according to the needs of both.

**Gender discrimination:** The systematic, unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies them rights, opportunities, or resources.

**Gender division of labour:** Socially determined ideas and practices which define what roles and activities are deemed appropriate for women and men.

**Gender equality:** Denotes women having the same opportunities in life as men, including the ability to participate in the public sphere.

**Gender equity:** Denotes the equivalence in life outcomes for women and men, recognising their different needs and interests, and requiring a redistribution of power and resources.

**Gender gaps:** Statistical and practical indicators of the differences in access to resources and to social and economic benefits for men and women.

**Gender imbalance:** Unequal distribution of women's and men's access to and control of resources, services, and benefits, and their participation in production and social reproduction.

**Gender inequality:** Biases against men or women determined by their gender, such that women's and men's participation in different social, political, and economic sectors, and in development in general, leads to unequal outcomes and benefits.

**Gender mainstreaming:** A process to realise gender awareness within an organisation and/or its policies, programmes, and projects. An organisational strategy to bring a gender perspective to all aspects of an institution's policy and activities, through building gender capacity and accountability. In energy it involves recognising gender differences in energy needs, use and priorities; developing programmes responding specially to these needs; and incorporating meaningful roles for both women and men in planning and implementing programmes.

**Gender needs:** Shared and prioritised needs identified by women that arise from their common experiences as a gender.

**Gender planning:** The technical and political processes and procedures necessary to implement gender-sensitive policy.

**Gender relations:** Hierarchical relations of power between women and men that tend to disadvantage women.

**Gender training:** A facilitated process of developing awareness and capacity on gender issues, to bring about personal or organisational change for gender equality.

**Gender-aware policy:** A policy which takes into account the social relations of women and men as well as the differences in their needs, as opposed to a policy specifically for women or men.

**Intra-household resource distribution:** The dynamics of how different resources generated within the household, or which come into the household, are accessed and controlled by its members.

**National machineries for women:** Agencies with a mandate for the advancement of women established within and by governments for integrating gender concerns in development policy and planning.

**Patriarchy:** Systemic societal structures that institutionalise male physical, social, and economic power over women.

**Practical needs:** Those needs which arise immediately from the gender division of labour. In rural areas where women's tasks almost always involve fetching water and fuelwood, cooking, and other domestic chores, meeting these immediate practical needs requires improved water provision, easier access to fuel, better (less smoky) cooking stoves, or other time and effort (drudgery) saving technologies to make women's work less arduous.

**Productive needs:** Many women, in addition to their reproductive work, are engaged or would like to be engaged in productive activities that earn income. Many of these may be an extension of household tasks, for example, cooking food for sale, or making clothes at home for sale to others.

**Sex and gender:** Sex refers to the biological characteristics that categorise someone as either female or male. Gender refers to a system of socially defined roles, privileges, attributes, and relationships between women and men which are not determined by biology, but by social, cultural, political, and economic forces.

**Strategic needs/interests:** These refer to those things necessary to change the balance of power between men and women with the underlying assumption that women are on almost every front (social, economic, and political) subordinate to men in society. It involves strategies to change this through laws (equal property rights, opportunities and their effective enforcement) which aspire to women's emancipation, equality, and empowerment.

**WED approach:** The 'women, environment and development' approach considers that women have a special relationship with the environment, which is very different from men's, and more 'sustainable'. Programmes and projects should use women's special skills and indigenous knowledge about the natural environment. In doing this, a better overall outcome can be attained, in addition to catering to the special needs of women.

**Welfare approach:** Programmes aimed at practical needs, targeted especially to 'needy' women, who are seen as passive recipients (the charitable approach).

**WID:** The WID (or 'women in development') approach calls for greater attention to women in development policy and practices, and emphasises the need to integrate them into the development process.

**Women's empowerment:** A 'bottom-up' process of transforming gender power relations, through individuals or groups developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge it.

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