

*Farmer-led Integrated Upland Watershed  
Management Trainers' Resource Book*

*Module 4*

*Integrating Gender Concerns  
into Farmers' Watershed  
Management Programmes*

# INTEGRATING GENDER CONCERNS INTO FARMERS' WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES

## Objective of Module

Before going into the objective of the module, let us examine the degree of women's contribution to watershed management.

### (1) Are women contributing to watershed management?

- A great deal of work is being contributed by women to watershed management.
- Their livelihood and welfare are directly influenced by watershed management.
- Women's activities, interests, potentials, and responsibilities need to be acknowledged.
- However, strangely enough, although women are participants and beneficiaries of watershed management, they have been largely ignored in the process of formulating strategies for conserving and using the resources of watersheds.

### (2) Hence, the objectives of this module are:

- to pinpoint those underlying factors inhibiting women's participation in watershed management programmes,

- to indicate how this problem can be addressed to ensure women's full and active participation, so that they can eventually contribute to sustainable watershed management.

## Background

### (3) Who is involved in IWM?

- Much, if not most, of the work related to watershed management is carried out by women, but both men and women are involved.

### (4) Who controls the resources?

- It is men who control most of the resources – land, trees, crops, animals, water, technologies, finance, and information — and it is men who have the most ready access to the inputs, including training and extension, for the improvement of this system.

### (5) Who makes the decisions?

- Therefore, it is only natural that it is men who are expected to make the decisions related to the management of these resources.





## MODULE 4.1

### PROBLEM AREA

#### (6) The Objectives of Module 4.1 are to emphasise:

- that women have no fewer responsibilities and burdens than their menfolk in arranging and managing for households' needs, including the natural resources of watersheds and
- that, despite the above, the reality is that they are ignored in the very crucial stages of planning, both as participants and as beneficiaries, a development programme.

#### (7) What are the problems?

Most arise from socioeconomic roles

- Due to their social and economic roles, poor rural women have a close association with natural resources from which they must collect water, food, fuel, and income for their families.
- Yet, despite their traditional roles as agricultural and natural resource managers, and the extensive knowledge rural women possess that enables them to shoulder these responsibilities, they have been almost completely excluded from the processes that seek to formulate strategies for the use and management of these watershed resources.
- The continual neglect of rural women's important roles in upland watersheds, e.g., mountain agro-ecosystems' management, means that we are missing out on a great source of unexploited potential in the struggle to rehabilitate and improve the environmental conditions of rural villages in upland watersheds.
- The special difficulties that women face are the consequences of the sexual division of labour, double or triple work burdens, and unequal distribution of resources; all of which stem from their inferior status and lack of control over productive resources (including land and cash).

#### (8) What are the implications?

- Against this backdrop, women's lives are much more affected, in ways different from those of their male counterparts, by the environmental degradation occurring in the Himalayas, as well as in other regions of the world.
- For policy-makers and planners to address these issues positively, they must first and foremost listen to the rural men and women themselves in order to understand their realities, and they must be aware of the differences between the two.

#### The Realities of Farm Women and Men

#### (9) What farm activities do the men perform generally ?

- Men often have primary responsibilities for land preparation, herding and grazing animals, harvesting crops, marketing, and community work.
- In some societies practising purdah, or seclusion of women, men play a more active role in the farming system.

#### (10) What farm activities do women perform?

- Farm women in the mountains lead difficult lives, often spending 15-18 hours a day in arduous work.
- Days begin early, and are filled entirely with tasks related to water collection, meal preparation, fuelwood and fodder collection, house and animal shed cleaning, food-processing, caring for the livestock, and caring for the young and elderly.
- In addition to these daily tasks, women are largely responsible for the work in the fields, e.g., seed preparation, transplanting, sowing, weeding, harvesting, threshing, and storing.
- Women have even taken on the previously taboo task of ploughing in

Pakistan; some poor women were observed tied to a plough and pulling it themselves.

#### *Additional domestic burden for farm women*

- Many women are solely responsible for the farm and domestic work when their menfolk depart for several months of the year for trade, to escort livestock to faraway pastures, to seek employment in urban areas, or even to join the armed forces in battle as in Afghanistan.
- In these instances, women are entirely occupied and have no time for their personal hygiene or to spend time with their children.
- They are often undernourished and without adequate sleep, resulting in poor health conditions that put the whole family at risk.

#### *Women's low self-esteem*

#### **(11) Are the traditions and cultural restrictions affecting women's self-esteem and notions of their place in society?**

- In eight studies in the mountain regions of India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Nepal, women were reported to have a low self-image, low levels of confidence, and feelings of helplessness.
- In all societies, the status and position of women are below those of men, leading women to believe that they are dependent on men and cannot function without them, even in simple matters.
- They do not perceive themselves to be capable of making decisions on their own. In fact, the reality imposed by the high rate of male migration points to the strength and resilience of mountain women and their key role in sustaining farms and households without their menfolk.

#### *Country/culture/economic class-related sexual division of labour*

#### **(12) Do men and women share tasks in mountain communities?**

- It has been observed that in Tibeto-Burmese ethnic groups, there is a greater degree of parity between men

and women and greater extent of sharing the work burden than in other castes and ethnic groups.

- Where women's burdens are very great and there are opportunities for income generation, men have been known to take on tasks that are traditionally considered women's work (such as caring for livestock).

#### **(13) Who has control over resources?**

Except for Bhutan, by and large, control over the resources in most of the region can be described as follows.

- Women report limited access and control over resources and benefits.
- Married women and men both have access to the family's land and equipment, yet only men control their use.
- Women have access to and control small kitchen gardens, but they have no control over the larger plots of land.
- Often cash and assets, such as livestock and household supplies, are not available to nor controlled by women.
- Labour and employment opportunities are similarly controlled by men, even though they may be absent from home for long periods of time.
- Information on new technologies or practices is rarely made available to women farmers.
- Men are the recipients of the training and visits of extension staff, even if they are not involved in the agricultural or forest management practices which are being promoted.

#### **Gender Analysis**

#### **(14) How does Gender Analysis function?**

- Gender analysis is used to identify needs and priorities, analysing/ explaining the relevance of gender in conjunction with age, wealth, caste, race, religion, and so on.
- It embraces both women and men alike.

#### **(15) What are the points needing consideration under gender analysis?**

The various issues raised above strongly indicate that there is an urgent need to give due consideration to the following points.

- Watershed management planners should identify the problems and needs of women as well as men who inhabit any given watershed.
- Participatory approaches are widely recommended for mobilising local people and acknowledging their capabilities as managers of their resources.
- It is now believed that only with the active collaboration of local people can watershed management programmes succeed.
- And yet, ignorance of the gender perspective remains in these participatory strategies.

**(16) What is gender-sensitive watershed management?**

- In order to develop a gender perspective on watershed management, we must first have a clear understanding of what is meant by gender and of the difference between **gender** and **sex**.

**(17) What does sex mean?**

- Sex is a biologically determined phenomenon which cannot normally be altered.

**(18) What does gender mean?**

- Gender is a result of socialisation into a male or female role which ascribes certain behaviour according to sociocultural norms for one's sex.
- In some societies, gender relations are rigidly defined and enforced; in others, there is more flexibility.
- In most societies, people claim that their gender relations are natural, but these claims are rather based on cultural interpretations of what it means to be a woman or man.
- However, because gender relations are socially and culturally constructed, there is a possibility for change, unlike sex.
- What is one day man's work can become women's work, and vice versa, under changing social and economic circumstances.

**(19) How was the need for a Women in Development (WID) Approach felt?**

- In the history of development, women's needs and interests were at first ignored by planners.

- During the 1970s, the Women in Development (WID) approach was conceived to increase women's level of participation.

**(20) WID had some important shortcomings.**

- The explicit focus on women's projects implied that these were treated as separate and marginal sectors, outside of most projects.
- Making women a target group depicted women as a homogeneous group, thus ignoring variables such as age, status, wealth, caste, ethnicity, class, etc. This approach neglected, for instance, the distinctions between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law which are so significant in the South Asian subcontinent.
- A focus on women implied a lack of consideration of the relations between men and women which basically determine so many aspects of women's lives.

**Gender Planning Concept**

**(21) Why is gender planning needed?**

- To gain knowledge of the gender relations within households and communities in a watershed area
- This will reveal the differential needs, interests, and priorities of men and women and provide a basis for planning in order for watershed management programmes to address both sets of concerns.
- Women's **practical needs**, those that are related to the work which women are responsible for, and **strategic needs**, those that are required to bring about empowerment and changes in the relations with men, can be identified through such gender analysis.

**(22) Where to use gender planning?**

- Gender planning is needed to integrate a gender perspective into all levels of project and programme activities, in the field as well as at central planning offices.

- Many development agencies have transformed their WID approach to a Gender and Development (GAD)

approach over the last decade in order to address the elements that have been thus far overlooked in social analysis.

## MODULE 4.2

# APPROPRIATE TOOLS FOR GENDER ANALYSIS

### (23) Objectives of Module 4.2

- To show the use of gender analysis tools in order to obtain gender-segregated relevant data
- Thereby indicating the needs, interests, concerns, responsibilities, and priorities of women and men separately in the hill and mountain watershed areas of the HKH

### Gender Analysis Approaches

There are several methodologies which have been developed for gender analysis. A few of the more commonly used ones are outlined below.

*SEGA (Socioeconomic and Gender Analysis) Approach*

### (24) How did SEGA originate?

- In 1992/93, FAO, along with gender and development experts, investigated the effectiveness of gender analysis training being undertaken by FAO, UNDP, and the World Bank. The outcome of this review was the origin of SEGA.

### (25) What is SEGA ?

- It is an approach to development based on an analysis of the socioeconomic factors and participatory identification of women's and men's priorities and potential.
- It is for closing the gaps between what people need and what development delivers.
- It includes an analysis of the linkages between these development factors at three levels: macro, intermediate, and field.
- For any specific development plan or programme, the SEGA approach requires the explicit involvement of all

stakeholders in the identification of priority areas for action.

- It is designed for strengthening and building networks for people and organisations.
- It emphasises the need to understand how development policies and programmes are likely to affect the economic activities and social relationships among different groups of people.
- It has been designed for development practitioners at all levels.

### (26) What is the goal of the SEGA programme?

- To strengthen regional, national, and local capacities
- To undertake and use socioeconomic and gender analyses
- To achieve sustainable, equitable, and efficient development
- To incorporate gender and socioeconomic analyses in policies and programmes responsive to local people's needs and situations

### (27) What effects will it have?

Its strengthened capacities will be realised in subsequent policy analysis and formulation of:

- national sector planning and programming and
- specific project assistance.

### (28) What comprises the SEGA packages?

The SEGA package contains methods and tools to analyse and use socioeconomic and gender analyses. There are four basic instruments in the package

- The SEGA Users' Handbook
- The SEGA Training Materials
- Technical Guidelines
- The Information Kit



**(29) What are the Components and Levels of the SEGA approach?**

The components and levels of analyses of the SEGA approach (described in detail in each of the SEGA workbooks) include in the following Table.

Components of Analysis	Levels of Analysis	Components of the Process
Development Context Livelihoods Stakeholder Needs, Resources and Constraints	Macro Intermediate Field	Participation Network-Building Compilation of Information Conflict Resolution

**(33) What are the most critical data to be recorded?**

- Age
- Sex
- Marital status
- Activities

**(30) More information on this new Programme can be obtained from the reference given in further reading and at the end of this resource book.**

In addition, A Manual for Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis: Responding to the Development Challenge by ECOGEN is available for reference (see further reading). This manual introduces participatory strategies and tools for the following uses:

- organising strategies,
- gathering information/raising awareness,
- defining roles and priorities,
- assessing needs/identifying projects,
- planning and formulating projects, and
- strategisation for change.

Each tool is presented in a very clear and simple manner, giving its purpose, process, materials needed, notes to the facilitator, and an example.

**Time Allocation Study****(31) How is it conducted?**

- It involves establishing a schedule of visits to households on random days throughout a given period, at random times throughout the day.
- Researchers visit the specified household at the appointed hour of the appointed day and record what each member of the family is doing.

**(32) Is it a useful tool?**

- It is a useful tool for collecting data on how women and men spend their days.

Note: Other information can be noted down during the visit.

**(34) What is the speciality of this study?**

- It is a direct and instantaneous observation.
- Data thus gathered are reliable.
- Villagers are not required to rely on their recall of events of the previous day.
- Preferences, constraints, and comparisons amongst members of various ethnic groups can also be elicited.

**(35) How does it work?**

- This method does not itself directly frame questions related to social relationships or women's access, control, or decision-making.
- It rather provides researchers with an easy and acceptable entry point to households.
- Once a rapport is established with household members, other more in-depth questions can be asked.

**Harvard Model****(36) How does it work?**

- It sees activities as the most suitable way of conducting gender analysis and examines projects rather than policies.

**(37) What are the drawbacks of this method?**

- It ignores the analyses of social relations.
- It has limited use beyond project frameworks.

Note: An adapted version of this model is found in the Gender Analysis and Forestry Training Package developed by FAO.

Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA)

- PRA has not been effectively used for gender analysis.

- Though it could be if the facilitator uses the tools for this purpose.
- The ECOGEN Manual recommends specific PRA tools throughout the book and specifically focusses on ways in which PRA can be used for gender analysis.

## MODULE 4.3

### *EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES ON GENDER - CASE STUDIES*

**(38) What effects are the development programmes creating?**

- Experiences indicate that from most development programmes, even with the best intentions of embracing both women and men alike, women generally are left out.
- Programmes are increasingly proving to be gender biased unduly in favour of the male section of society.
- The main reason for this is the failure of such development programmes to segregate gender-related relevant data in the planning stage to see where women's needs, interests, responsibilities, and priorities lie.

**(39) Hence, the objectives are to critically analyse the following case studies on gender analysis to see how essential it is**

- to consider and include the gender specificity aspect in a development programme and
- to include, right from the planning phase, equitable distribution of benefits to women.

#### **Gender Analysis Case Studies**

**(40) What does gender analysis intend to achieve?**

- In this module, a few case studies are presented to illustrate the use of gender analysis to generate gender-disaggregated data and provide insights into the needs, concerns, and perceptions of women in the hill and mountain areas of the HKH region.

**(41) How were the case studies done?**

- As SEGA is a relatively new approach, these case studies did not employ its methods, but rather relied more on the Harvard Approach, some PRA tools, and participatory observations.

*Ghusel Village Development Committee, Nepal*

**(43) Who conducted the study?**

- A team of researchers from ECOGEN (Clark University, USA) and the Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS), Kathmandu, collaborated in 1993 to conduct research in a village outside Kathmandu.

**(44) Why was the study conducted?**

- To examine the effects of a group-based lending scheme for dairy production on gender dynamics.

**(45) What was it seeking to understand?**

The study sought to understand:

- the gender-based implications for labour patterns as well as for access and control over related resources;
- socioeconomic consequences of this agriculture/livestock livelihood system across gender, caste, ethnicity, and class;
- the effects of livestock production on the natural resource base and the coping strategies of residents; and
- the policy changes and programme options which could address the ecological and economic problems faced by the women and men of Ghusel.

**(46) How were the data collected by the research team?**

- The research team employed both qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Participant observation was used to record all activities of female and male informants over a 24-hour period.
- They used the Activities, Resources, and Benefits' Analysis to chart all farmer activities over a 12-month period and a

Resources and Benefits' Analysis to document access, control, and decision-making over products and by-products.

- Key informants were interviewed from a diversity of households based on geographical dispersion, socioeconomic status, caste, gender, and household type.
- Focus group discussions were also held.

**(47) What made the farmers take up the Dairy Development Programme?**

- In 1986, credit was made available to poor farmers.
- The National Dairy Corporation encouraged farmers to produce milk for the market.
- Ghuseel farmers sought loans for the purchase of livestock for intensive buffalo-raising.
- Within each household, families strove to increase livestock numbers to six buffaloes in order to maximise profits.

Impact of the Programme

**(48) Who benefited from the programme, women or men?**

- Although the Dairy Development Programme brought substantial financial returns, the extra fodder required resulted in a heavy toll on the forests and the women.
- Women were responsible for collecting and carrying the fodder and extra fuelwood required to cook the buffaloes' food.
- These responsibilities, combined with the usual daily chores, resulted in restricted mobility, little or no leisure time, high-levels of girl drop-outs from school, and early marriages in households with few daughters.
- While acknowledging the economic benefits accrued to family members as a whole, these girls and women cited little or no personal gains from buffalo-raising.
- Women had no access or control over the Rs 49,426 typically earned per buffalo (before expenses).
- In addition, home consumption of milk decreased, while men's consumption of alcohol and incidence of gambling increased.

**(49) Was there any positive change for women farmers?**

- The only positive change for women was that some men had to participate in fodder collection, although they did this in order to protect their investments in livestock and not out of concern for the excessive workload on their womenfolk.

**(50) How was the differential impact noticed?**

- Information on the differential impacts of the credit and dairy schemes was obtained through the gender analysis.
- The inclusion of women's perspectives allowed the researchers to learn of the downside, of the very negative trends that were affecting women and the forests.

**(51) Would there have been similar results if men were surveyed?**

- A survey of men would have revealed only the significant economic gains that were made.

***Almora (Kumaon Region) and Tehri (Garhwal Region), India***

**(52) Who conducted the research?**

- For an ICIMOD Fact-Finding Mission on Gender and Development, a researcher conducted gender analysis in two cash crop programme-run villages in the Hills of Uttar Pradesh, India, in 1996.

**(53) How was the research done?**

- The researcher followed the Gender Roles' Framework, drawing up profiles of Activities, Access and Control, Socio-political Dimensions of Women's Position and Influencing Factors (Handbook for Gender and Development Fact-Finding Mission).

The Status of Women

**(54) Who controls the resources, women or men?**

- Though women are the most active members, access to land, labour and credit is controlled by men.



- Women do not have any legal right to own land and do not therefore have access to bank loans. However, they do have access to all types of land, including homestead, irrigation, and communal lands, but not to agricultural produce.
- Access to education is mediated by men because of the restrictions on mobility, which, for girls, is limited to the home and fields.
- Agricultural extension messages miss women entirely; women-headed households must rely on male support from within the community for advice on seeds and inputs.
- Membership and participation in formal bodies and political institutions are totally controlled by men, despite a 33% reservation for women.

#### Impact of the Programme

#### **(55) Who benefited from the programme?**

- The researcher found that the introduction of cash crops has added extra work, leading to 14-16 hour days.
- It has led to the deterioration of fodder crops.
- It required more labour for stall-feeding livestock.
- Except for marketing, all livestock-related work is carried out by women.
- Besides the collection of fodder and fuelwood from the forests, women collected herbs, fruit, bark, and so on.
- The women of both villages perform not only more agricultural tasks than men, but also the more arduous ones.
- Long-term male migration has resulted in added workloads for women.
- Out of 10 households, five had a *de facto* female head.
- Women farmers have in many cases been forced to become daily wage labourers.

#### Change in Male-dominated Marketing

#### **(56) Market-related activities have been the sole domain of men, although this is now changing due to:**

- the absence of men and
- the exposure of young girls through education and development initiatives.

#### **(57) What are the community-level changes?**

- At the community level, where women deal with wider social issues, they have more decision-making capabilities than men.
- This is apparent from the various social movements introduced in the region such as the Chipko and anti-liquor movements.
- For issues and problems which women can easily relate to, action and leadership are quickly mobilised.
- But, in general, women's effective participation in decision-making is lower than that of men.
- The self-perception of older women demonstrates an acceptance of their subservience, while the younger women are unhappy with their status but are resigned to their fate by the heavy burden of work

#### ***Paro, Shemgang and Tashigang Districts, Bhutan***

#### **(58) Who conducted the study?**

- UNDP and UNIFEM, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, decided to undertake a study in Bhutan to examine the work patterns of rural men and women.

#### **(59) Why was the study done?**

- To highlight areas of household and farm work which could be made easier with the aid of improved technologies.

#### **(60) How was the study done?**

The Time Allocation Study method was used.

- A pilot survey was conducted in three districts (Paro, Shemgang, and Tashigang).
- Group discussions were held.

#### Result of the Study

#### **(61) Who benefited from the programme?**

- Researchers found that women perform the lion's share of the domestic workload.

- They also documented a small but significant number of men who were primary caretakers of the home.
- Moreover, the incidence of men contributing as helpers in child-care, cooking, washing clothes, etc was also significant.
- From the Time Allocation Studies, researchers found that, in the study areas, there was no sharply defined gender-based division of labour.
- They also realised that men seemed to have an accurate perception of women's workload.
- In many circumstances, women and men decide jointly on the expenditure of funds, hiring of labour, purchase of new tools, and so on.
- Ninety-one per cent of the female population is involved in agricultural tasks compared to 75 per cent of the men.
- Women contribute 50-80 per cent of the total agricultural labour.
- In many cases, women have primary responsibility for fodder and fuelwood collection.
- The harvesting and collection of these two products can have a tremendous impact on the condition of forest resources.
- Forests are an essential component of a healthy subsistence agricultural system, active participation by women is an essential component of effective forest management.
- Women are heavily involved in collection of the forest products needed to maintain the farm economy.
- Nepalese women were found to collect an average of 35 per cent of the forest products used in the household.
- It is likely that women have different knowledge of forest plant species used and different product priorities than men.
- It was predicted that the forest user group with a higher proportion of women executive members should show a pattern of more similarity and fewer differences in men's and women's participation.
- The user group with no women committee members will not show such similarities.
- Government-sponsored forestry efforts began in Baglung district in 1978.

#### **(62) Is it a gender egalitarian community?**

- In Western Bhutan, land titles are traditionally transferred through daughters instead of sons.
- However, even without the landholding factor, the relationship between men and women in the Bhutanese household has certain egalitarian aspects.

#### **(63) Why are women less involved in decision-making?**

Women are, as yet, very much underrepresented in new decision-making bodies and development programmes, due to

- women's inability to leave home because of heavy workloads.

*Nepal (Baglung district)*

#### **(64) Two Groups**

- A community forestry user group having an executive committee with nearly 50 per cent women members
- A community forestry user group having no women executive committee members.

#### Background

#### **(65) How important is the role of women in managing natural resources?**

- Women play major roles in the farming systems of Nepal.

#### Community Forestry User Group having an executive committee with women members

***Majh Katera, Dhamja VDC, W.N. 8&9, Baglung, Nepal***

#### **(66) How does Majh Katera (Baglung) look geo-demographically?**

- Located at the head of the Sangkhola watershed about five hours' walk west of Baglung Bazaar
- Elevation- 1,600 – 2,000 metres above mean sea level
- Land is gently sloping and more fertile than in Bhim Pokhara



- Ethnicity: 75 per cent *Chhetri* and the rest are *Magar*
- Household number – from just 18 to now over 100
- Most households have income from the army
- A large proportion of men are serving in the army which is the major reason why nearly half of the members of the executive committee are women.

**(67) When was the Majh Katera forest plantation carried out?**

- The first plantation took place in 1985 and was carried out by the forest protection committee and then further plantations were carried out in 1988 and 1990.
- In 1994, operation plans were formulated.

- The executive committee underwent a radical change
- with women members being selected for nearly half of the seats.

**(68) Was it felt necessary to have women on the executive committee?**

- Regulations were prepared for forest resources' management and utilisation.
  - Women made most of the rules.
  - All the forest product-related work was carried out by women.
  - Having women in the committee, they learned about management.
  - It was felt important for a certain percentage of women to have a role in the meeting/decision-making.

**(69) How did the Community Forestry Operational Plan work?**

- When the forest is opened for use for four to five days:
  - the committee gives one coupon to each user household each day to collect one load of firewood;
  - the coupon is taken back as the people leave the forest;
  - after the first day, the forest is checked, if there are enough products, coupons are distributed again;

- the forest ground grass is also distributed once a year;
- NRs 5/- is charged for collecting forest products; and
- the poorest of the poor are provided with free ground grass, based on the decision of the committee.

**(70) What was the degree of awareness about the forestry assembly/revenue among the sexes?**

- Most men and women have a relatively high level of awareness about the assembly and its purpose.
- Men and women had nearly similar perceptions about forest management.
- However, women were unaware of how the money was used.

**(71) What forest resources were available from the plantation area?**

- There were some benefits in terms of firewood and grass from the community forest.
- But most of the households would have to go elsewhere for forest products.
- Men see forest resources as revenue for maintaining schools.
- For women, the actual products from the forests are the major benefits.

**(72) What was the reaction to the rules and regulations about the forestry resources' management and utilisation?**

- Women generally had more of a negative reaction to the rules than the men (especially financial arrangements).
- Women were suspicious about whether the money collected was actually spent on school rather than on private gains.

**(73) Who was expected to take part in community forestry activities?**

- Men were always expected to participate in forestry activities.
  - All men participated in forest establishment and maintenance activities.
  - But women's participation was split along caste/ethnic lines (*Magar*(s) participated more than *Chhetri*(s))

- It is important to have women on the forest committee to improve protection of the forest area (reason given by both sexes).

**(74) What were the major barriers perceived to women's participation?**

- The major barriers to women's participation (commented by both sexes) on the committee were:
  - lack of time and women's lack of public discussion or public speaking ability.
  - Women stated that society's reaction to them working as committee members is a barrier to them taking on that role.

**(75) Are there social factors preventing women from active participation?**

- Women generally do not have opportunities to discuss forestry matters in public forums even if they so wished.
- Each household was responsible for sending one person to meetings and, if a male was available, it was most appropriate for him to go, despite women's active involvement in day-to-day forest use and management,
  - as long as formal forest management and its related activities are culturally defined as being outside of women's domain, formal participation by women is likely to remain low.

The Community Forestry User Group Having No Women Executive Committee Members

**(76) Bhim Pokhara VDC W.N. 1., Baglung District., Nepal**

**(77) How does Bhim Pokhara (Baglung) look geo-demographically?**

- Located three hours' walk west of Baglung Bazaar
- Elevation: 1,400 –1,700 metres
- Household nos 63
  - mixed community
    - \* *Chhetri*-35%
    - \* *Brahmin*-33%

- \* *Sarki* -22%
- \* *Magar* -10%

• Community Forestry

- a mixture of mature forest and plantation area
- natural forest - 2 ha.
- plantation area-10 ha.

**(78) When was plantation carried out?**

- The first trees were planted in 1983.
- At the time, there was a conflict over land ownership, and planting trees on the land was seen as a way of definitively establishing the land as public property.
- Plantation continued and expanded the following year.
- The Forest Office suggested that:
  - if 10,000 seedlings were planted, then
  - wages for a forest watcher could be provided by the Forest Office.
- Subsequent plantation took place in 1985 and 1987.

**(79) What led to the formation of an informal forest management committee?**

- Shortly after the 1984 planting, an informal committee was established to oversee construction of a local school building.
- The committee decided to raise money to support the school by selling grass from the plantation area.
- Thus, the informal school committee became the *de facto* forest management committee.

**(80) Was it this need that led to a formal users' assembly formation?**

- In 1993, the committee asked the District Forestry Officer, DFO to approve of branch pruning.
- This eventually led to a users' assembly, held in May 1994.
  - Following this the current all-male executive committee was selected and
  - an Operation Plan was drafted.



### (81) How is the users' assembly working?

- At the assembly, there were discussions about the distribution rules and penalties.
- The committee would ask the users and, according to their needs, issues were discussed.
- The assembly approved the rules by a show of hands.

### (82) What were the methods used while making use of the natural resources?

- Land is divided into large plots by a group of people.
- The prices of the large plots are fixed by the committee.
- The large plots are then divided into smaller plots according to the number of people who want to buy that grass.
- One person takes the responsibility of collecting money from each person who takes a smaller plot.
- These smaller plots are assigned to the people on the basis of a lottery, so there is no clash between the people.

### (83) What were the comments of male committee members on the importance of women committee members?

- Having women on the committee is the best idea, but they are busy with their own household work.
- Another thing, they are considered illiterate.
- Socially, women are dominated in the community; they are encouraged to do household work.
- They are not so interested in being on the committee as they are not aware of how they can motivate others.

### (84) What were the women's perceptions about the users' assembly?

- Most women are aware that an assembly meets to distribute grass.
- Most women don't go to the mass assemblies, because:
  - they have no time,
  - they don't feel they know how to speak in public, and
  - women who attend the meetings are those who do not have an adult male in the house.

- Most women only know that forests are controlled by the powerful and wealthy people of the village.
- Most women stated that groups of the wealthy and powerful get together and make decisions.
- The women said that their lack of attendance was due to:
  - a lack of leisure time,
  - a lack of confidence about how to speak and interact with men in public, and
  - their perception that the local society did not approve of their attendance at meetings.
- Half of the women interviewed said that they did not know if it was important to have women on the committee.
- Women mentioned that:
  - one barrier to their involvement on the committee was lack of 'power' (their inability to command the respect their men do in the public sector).
  - This is seen by women as a necessity for enforcing the rules.

### (85) What were the resources available from the Bhim Pokhara plantation?

- Bhim Pokhara forest area is a plantation which has been established within the last eleven years.
  - Consequently, there is not a great diversity of products to be had from the community forest area.
  - Grazing is banned.
- A limited amount of grass, firewood, leaf-litter are available.

### (86) How do the sexes perceive the benefits from the forest area?

- For women — the major benefit from the area was forest resources.
- For men — it produced the revenue to maintain the school.
- Planted trees have prevented cattle from accidentally falling to death on the steeply sloping community ground.

**(87) Who participates in the assembly meetings?**

- It was the general perception of both sexes that
  - when a representative from a particular house was asked to participate in a forestry activity, it was the man who was expected to take part.

**(88) What are the issues these two cases raise about women's active involvement in community forestry users' assemblies?**

- Members of the executive committee do not share equal responsibility or authority.
- Most of the authority to make decisions and raise issues is held by the committee chairman.
- The concept of one person, one vote does not apply to committee decision-making.
- People who give inputs into decision-making are usually of relatively higher status due to age, caste, and wealth.
- User group members don't need to interact with committee members on a day-to-day basis to find out about forestry activities or rules.
- Thus, simply having women committee members does not create a context in which women from the user group have greater access to forestry decision-making.
- As long as committee responsibilities and authority remain primarily in the hands of the chairman, the impact of women occupying positions on the committee will be minimal.

**(89) Do the women have priorities elsewhere?**

- For most women (and men) community forestry takes a back seat to the priorities of producing food crops and other obligations integral to their subsistence existence.
- The products available from the community forests (in these two cases) fulfil a relatively small proportion of the people's needs; most needs are met from private land or other areas of national forest.

- Women's participation will remain low until women are given some relief from their workloads.
- They should be assured of tangible benefits from the time they spend in forestry committee meetings. (It is reported that women spend on an average of 10.8 hrs/day in work activities compared to 7.5 hrs. of work per day for men.)
- Therefore, even if they are interested, very few women have time to spend at a meeting discussing forestry issues.

**(90) What are the implications for community forestry?**

- Having women on the executive committee has made a difference in Majh Katera.
- Most men interviewed stated that forest protection has improved since women have been on the committee.
- Women of Majh Katera executive committee feel that they are playing an active and productive role in forest management.
- Whether to select women as committee members, and then to socially support them in that role, will be a local decision based on local values, attitudes, and beliefs.
- Lack of literacy was a constraint to women participating in the executive committee.
- One of the major factors affecting women's status and the role they play in decision making was whether husbands lived on the farms or not.
- The high proportion of women on the executive committee is not an effect of increased participation, but rather another indicator of a broader social change catalysed by exposure to life beyond the boundaries of Baglung district.

***Dominican Republic*****(91) An example of a gender insensitive reforestation programme from the Dominican Republic**

- Projects can fail when:
  - women's obligations are ignored,
  - there is lack of resource control by

- women, and
- women have heavy time burdens.

**(92) In what way has the reforestation programme proved to be gender insensitive?**

- By assuming that women's needs would be automatically fulfilled when men's needs are served.
- The policy initiative was based on the assumption that men and women used wood for the same purposes.
- Fortmann and Rocheleau (1989) in IFPRI note that:
  - the reforestation component of the Plan Sierra integrated rural development project did not consider the possibility that men's needs from the forest may differ from women's needs.
  - Consequently, only men were consulted.

Programme Implementation

**(93) Whose needs were met by the project?**

- As a result, the watershed management programme emphasised:

- the inter-cropping of cash and subsistence crops and
- the planting of indigenous and exotic pines for timber.

- Women were only consulted during a mid-project evaluation and it turned out that their needs were not met by the project.
- Women needed trees for fuelwood supplies and for fibre for basket-weaving.

Negative Effect of the Programme

**(94) Did the programme prove more of a problem than an asset to women?**

- The scarcity of fuelwood forced some women to give up their cassava bread processing operations due to time constraints.
- Since technical assistance to the project was available only during start-up, women's needs for fuelwood were recognised so late on in the project that they could not be addressed.

## MODULE 4.4

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### (95) Objectives of Module 4.4

- To bring out those relevant factors which are presently proving to be inhibiting in the process of improving the livelihoods of women farmers
- To show how these factors can be addressed in order to make gender-sensitive development programmes

#### Institutional Imperatives for Integrating Gender Concerns

#### (96) Is gender analysis focussed on the wrong level?

- A review of experiences of integrating gender in development programmes and projects indicates that gender analysis often focusses on the field level much more than on the policy level or institutional level.
- The difficulties in integrating analysis and planning on different levels could partly explain the gulf between development programmes and the needs and interests of people in local communities.
- This lack of integration may be due to the top-down approach of planners, or refer to the fact that policy-makers interests are in conflict with those of the communities.
- It may also be linked to the problem of how local knowledge, conditions, and aspirations may be translated into policies and plans.

#### (97) What remedial measures are needed at various levels for gender integration?

- One valuable tool for analysing gender integration at these various levels is FINNIDA's Looking at Gender and Forestry (1993). A brief summary of this document follows.

#### (98) Policy Level

- At the policy level, the review stresses the importance of a goal that includes the participation of both women and men.
- The training of foresters, agriculturists, and watershed management professionals must include an understanding of indigenous knowledge, local realities, and gender analysis.
- Supporting studies may be needed.
- As it is a male-dominated profession, there is a strong need to include women in forestry, agriculture, and watershed management education and as extension staff.
- Land tenure, as it applies to women and men in local communities, should be investigated.
- In general, the interests of women and men should be integrated into all of the project documents instead of having a separate section on women.

#### (99) Institutional Level

- At the institutional level, gender analysis should be part of each component of any capacity-building programme.
- One should never assume that gender has nothing to do with it.
- Specific indicators and activities to track the gender aspects of a programme must furthermore be included.
- Another important factor is the examination of the roles of women and men within the institution itself.
- It is at this level that values and norms regarding gender are strong and subtle.
- These institutions assume themselves to be gender neutral, although they are male dominated and have almost no representation of females at decision-making levels.



### (100) Field Level

- At the field level, it is critical to let women speak for themselves and not to accept only the word of men (either villagers or extension or project staff levels, who speak only on their own behalf with regard to their problems, needs, and interests.
- Any method, whether it be participatory observation, PRA, gender analysis, time allocation studies, or other, must accurately reflect the thoughts and hopes of rural women in any order for it to be a useful tool for planning.
- More important than the method may be the attitude of the researcher, and his or her sincere interest and ability to listen and understand.
- In the end, it will be the commitment of individuals within institutions responsible for watershed management which will make a difference and determine whether or not it is possible for such programmes to contribute to gender equity.

### (101) Conclusion

Women can have an improved standard of living. Gender-sensitive development programmes are designed and implemented with the due consideration that women are both interactive participants and beneficiaries of these programmes. For this, if the following issues are addressed, it will facilitate the process.

- There is a need to focus gender analysis on policy and institutional levels.
- The existing gap between development programmes and the needs and interests of the local people needs to be removed by developing gender-sensitive programmes.
- There is a need to translate local knowledge, conditions, and aspirations into policies and plans.
- From the case studies, it is evident that, in many cases, women's priorities differ from those of men, and they need to be addressed in the planning stages of development programmes.
- Inclusion of women in decision-making local institutions/organisations is one of the ways to have gender representation for establishing gender-sensitive programmes. However, case studies show that simply having women as executive members does not create a context in which women on the executive committee have greater access to decision-making. Women need to have 'power' (in the form of sociocultural recognition for their participation) on an equal footing to their male counterparts.

The following modules highlight experiences in transforming degraded upland watersheds and managing them sustainably through farmers actions/ initiatives.

## Further Reading

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