



Discussion Paper
Series No. MEI 95/3

Tourism and Gender

Impact and Implications of Tourism on Nepalese Women

Dibya Gurung

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Published by

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
G.P.O. Box 3226,
Kathmandu, Nepal

Typesetting at ICIMOD Publications' Unit

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Tourism and Gender

Impact and Implications of Tourism on Nepalese women

A Case Study from the
Annapurna Conservation Area Project

Dibya Gurung

MEI Series No. 95/3

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April 1995
International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
Kathmandu, Nepal

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to a number of individuals and institutions without whose help and guidance this study would not have been possible.

To DWET Training Managers: Vijaya Laxmi Gurung, Laxmi Pun, Sakila Gurung and Lal Devi Gurung for assisting me in the field work.

To my seniors, Dr. C.P. Gurung, Executive Officer (KMNTC), Mr. Siddhartha Bajracharya, Project Director (KMTNC/ACAP), and Mr. Shailendra Thakali, Senior Programme Officer (KMTNC) without whose constant encouragement and support I would not have been inspired and motivated to complete this study.

To ICIMOD and KMTNC/ACAP for giving me this opportunity.

To MANUSHI and Dr. Govind Koirala for helping me to collect secondary information.

Also to the people of Dhampus and organisations working in the Dhampus area for giving their valuable time and insights and furnishing me with the required information to complete this study.

PREFACE

This Discussion Paper is one of a Series of Papers related to aspects of Mountain Tourism resulting from a NORAD-funded Project entitled "Mountain Tourism for Local Community Development". The present paper is the revised version of a paper presented at the First Review Meeting of the Project held in Pokhara, Nepal, in August 1994. The paper was commissioned as an input to the proposed Case Studies on Mountain Tourism in the hill and mountains of Nepal, the U.P. hills and Himachal Pradesh of India, and the North West Frontier Province and Northern Areas of Pakistan. All the Case Studies are being published in the MEI Discussion Paper Series. In the present paper, Ms. Dibya Gurung describes the impacts and implications of tourism on Nepalese women and analyses and the processes in the Annapurna Conservation Project Area.

On behalf of ICIMOD, Dr. Pitamber Sharma is the Project Coordinator as well as the technical editor of these papers.

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction and Background	1
History and Brief Overview of Tourism in Nepal	1
Importance of the Gender Perspective in Tourism	2
Objectives of the Study	4
Methodology	4
Organisation of the Report	5
2. Women and Tourism	6
Women's Situation	6
Women's Work Burden	6
Women's Employment in the Tourism Sector	7
Factors Influencing Women's Participation in Tourism	10
<i>Few Silver Linings</i>	11
3. The Dhampus Study	13
Objectives of the Dhampus study	13
Methodology Used for the Dhampus Study	13
A Profile of Dhampus	15
Trekking Tourism in Dhampus	18
<i>Arrival of Tourists</i>	18
Situation of Women in the Study Area Prior to the Advent of Tourism	21
<i>Women's Place in the Household</i>	21
<i>Women's Place in the Community</i>	23
<i>Implication of Tourism Interventions for Women</i>	24
Tourism-related Activities	24
<i>Direct Impact of Tourism-related Activities</i>	25
<i>Indirect Impact of Tourism-related Activities</i>	28
<i>Socioeconomic Status and Decision-making</i>	30
<i>Organisational Improvements</i>	32
<i>Local Men's Perceptions on the Impact of Tourism on Women</i>	34
Summary	35

4.	Gender Sensitivity in ACAP's Activities	37
	Background	37
	The Annapurna Conservation Area Project	37
	<i>Principles and Approaches</i>	40
	<i>Programmes</i>	41
	Gender and Gender Needs	41
	<i>Gender Sensitivity in the ACAP Programme</i>	42
	<i>Environmental Activity - Forestry Programme</i>	42
	<i>Shortcomings of the Forestry Programme in</i>	
	<i>Relation to Gender Issues</i>	45
	<i>Lessons Learned</i>	46
	<i>Economic Activity - DWET</i>	49
	<i>Shortcomings of the DWET Project</i>	58
	<i>Community Development Activity</i>	60
	<i>ACAP's Monitoring and Evaluation Criteria</i>	62
5.	Gender Gaps in Tourism in Nepal	64
	Gender Gaps at Policy Levels	64
	Gender Gaps at Programme Formulation Levels	66
	Gender Gaps at Implementation and Decision-making Levels	66
	<i>Participatory Limitations</i>	67
	Research Gaps	68
6.	Recommendations and Suggestions	69
		-
	Appendixes	75
	Bibliography	81
	List of Tables	
1:	Time Use Patterns of Household Members (in Hours)	7
2:	Employment by Type of Establishment	9
3:	Interviewees according to Ethnicity and Gender	14
4:	Interviewees according to Occupation	14
5:	Population of Dhampus VDC, 1992	15
6:	Migration: Dhampus VDC	17
7:	Establishments in Dhampus VDC	26
8:	Achievements of the DWET Project, December 1991 - June 1994	54

List of Maps

1:	Location Map of Dhampus	16
2:	Protected Areas of Nepal	38
3:	Annapurna Conservation Area	39

List of Figures

1:	Diagrammatic Representation of the Impact of Tourism on Dhampus Women	36
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Plates illustrating the text can be found on pages

47, 48, 50, 51, 55, 56, and 57

Introduction and Background

History and Brief Overview of Tourism in Nepal

In Nepal, tourism as an important economic sector was first recognised in 1959. Since then tourism has come of age and plays a pivotal role in the Nepalese economy. According to the tourism statistics of HMG, the annual flow of tourists in Nepal reached a figure of 334,353 in 1992 and earned a total foreign exchange equivalent of over Rs 2.84 billion. This accounted for 20 per cent of the total foreign exchange earnings of the nation. The tourist numbers, however, dropped to 293,567 in 1993, although the estimated foreign exchange earnings reached a level of over 3.5 billion. The foreign exchange earning figure would be higher if illegal exchanges were accounted for, and these are estimated at 37 per cent of the total transaction (Banskota and Sharma 1993).

The same statistics showed that the contribution to total GDP from the tourism sector increased from one per cent in 1974 to 3.8 per cent in 1992. This could be further increased if the current large import content of the tourism-related industries could be substituted by the domestic output.

This sector directly employed about 71,000 Nepalese in 1991 (DOT 1992) with several-fold more indirect and induced employment through backward and forward linkages with other sectors of the economy. Tourism's share in total employment in the country was estimated at 6.7 per cent in 1991.

Almost 60 per cent of tourists come to Nepal for holiday/pleasure purposes (DOT). Seasonally, October is the month when the maximum number of tourist arrivals are recorded. Minimum tourist arrivals occur in the rainy season of July. Genderwise, 60 per cent of the tourists coming to Nepal are male.

Trekking tourism, particularly in the mountain areas, occupies a prominent place in the Nepalese tourism industry. This is followed by mountaineering and rafting. According to the Tourism Statistics published by the Department of Tourism, HMG, the share of trekking tourism in the whole industry has varied over the years and stood at 11 per cent in 1992. A maximum of 16.7 per cent was recorded in 1989. Most of the trekking tourism in Nepal takes place in protected areas. Over 50 per cent of the trekkers visit the Annapurna region,

followed by the Sagarmatha and Langtang regions. There are other trekking areas that have been opened in the mountain regions such as the Kanchenjunga, Makalu, Manaslu, Mustang, and Dolpa regions, but the collective number of trekking tourists visiting these areas is no more than three per cent, mainly because of the lack of tourism infrastructure in these areas.

While trekking tourism has opened up new economic opportunities for mountain inhabitants, the overcrowding of mountain tourists in a few areas, coupled with the neglect of the conservation dimension of the mountain environment, has begun to pose a threat to the sensitive micro-ecosystems. Rapid deforestation and litter pollution are some of the consequences that have become pronounced. There are other negative impacts, particularly cultural invasions, declining interest in agriculture, preference of local youths for tourism-related jobs rather than education, prostitution (mostly in urban areas), etc.

While the shift away from agriculture has eased the work burden of mountain women, they are apparently the principal victims of these negative impacts. Nonetheless, women have benefitted from the infrastructure created for promoting tourism, such as drinking water and roads, which have helped many mountain women to save time for productive activities, sanitation, and children's education. The benefits, however, have been greater for richer households due to the capital-intensive nature of the tourism industry. Again, the information base is insufficient to ascertain the magnitude of both the positive and negative implications of mountain tourism on the mountain people, particularly the women.

Importance of the Gender Perspective in Tourism

Any acceptable definition of development cannot ignore women, not only because they constitute one half of the population, but also because substantial growth in production depends largely on women and progress towards just societies requires a greater gender equality. In Nepal, recognition of gender concerns in development is quite recent. Major constraints to promoting the role of women in development are the absence of government policies addressing gender issues in development at the national level, in general, and at the sectoral level in particular; lack of sector-specific programmes that explicitly target women to ensure their participation, particularly in large-scale projects; a weak institutional set-up for planning, coordinating, and monitoring activities related to WID; lack of gender desegregated data; and social and legal systems that preclude women's ownership or inheritance of assets or property except under special conditions.

In trying to develop an understanding of women in tourism in Nepal's context, it is necessary to refer to the basic social, cultural, and economic frameworks that influence aptitudes and predispositions. Stereotypical assumptions, for example, that men and women differ fundamentally; that men are superior to women both physically and intellectually; that men and women think differently and are naturally drawn to different forms of intellectual activities; and that physical differences (bodily characteristics) influence mental traits, are of particular concern. Against this backdrop, tourism research from the gender perspective is still a largely understudied area in Nepal's development context.

Given the absence of gender-related tourism information, a conceptual framework for looking at the tourism sector from the gender perspective is needed. The basic framework is that of examining gender equality in sharing both the merits and demerits implicated by tourism in terms of work burden, decision-making, household education, and nutrition from increased household income.

Five elements, namely, **control**, **mobilisation**, **conscientiousisation**, **access** and **welfare** are often considered with regard to gender equality. Since these elements are currently less in favour of the female population, the basic gender issue in Nepal is that of empowering women by fulfilling their strategic as well as their practical gender needs. Ethnic variations in harnessing any impacts of an intervention such as tourism by mountain women can also be expected to be significant, and this needs to be addressed. The policies and implementation modalities of the principal actors in the tourism sector also warrant similar examination from a gender equality perspective. While the women in Nepal are generally deprived of various opportunities, and since no study has yet established women's position in the tourism industry, there is a clear need to answer the following questions.

- Do women take part in the industry or does it offer employment to women?
- Do women have access to this source of income? If so, which women and how?
- What are the options available if they are to be benefitted?
- What are the mountain tourism development implications on women's work burden, skill utilisation, decision-making, and power relations within the household and community?

Objectives of the Study

The present study seeks to examine some of the consequences of tourism on women and the economic and social transformations that are occurring as a result of these developments in mountain areas. Particular importance is given to the economic and sociocultural forces that affect women's work, decision-making, and status and to how these reshape gender relations and determine women's roles in terms of benefitting from tourism potentials for a market economy in the mountains. The specific objectives of this study are:

- to review and assess the impact and implication of mountain tourism for women;
- to review selected environmental, economic, and community development activities initiated as a consequence of tourism in tourist areas and to assess the sensitivity of such activities to gender issues at the policy/programme formulation and implementation levels;
- to present a case study of the tourism-related development initiatives deemed successful in addressing gender issues;
- to identify the gaps that currently exist between the gender concerns perceived at the policy/programme level and the concerns perceived by women themselves; and
- to provide recommendations for the development of a strategy through which the gender issue could be better addressed at the policy, programme formulation, and implementation levels.

Methodology

The secondary data for the study were generated mostly from the available literature on tourism such as the Tourism Master Plan and HMG's policy documents, Tourism related research reports, newspaper clippings, project documents, technical reports, and a number of unpublished reports. Informal and formal unstructured interviews were conducted. Interviewees were selected to represent cross-sections in the tourism industry both in the private and public sectors; i.e., officials from the Ministry of Tourism, Department of Tourism, Hotel Management and Tourist Training Centre, Department of Civil Aviation, Hotel and Trekking Associations, Trekking Companies, and so on. Primary data were gathered through a field study in Dhampus VDC.

The extent and scope of this study have been limited due partly to the almost total absence of information on tourism and gender. Tourism study in Nepal, as in the rest of the world, is an altogether new area and micro-level sociological investigations in the field are lacking.

Organisation of the Report

The report is organised into Six Chapters. After the introduction, the first chapter provides a brief overview of the tourism industry in Nepal (with particular reference to trekking as an important component of mountain tourism) and highlights the current issues regarding the involvement of women in tourism. Chapter two provides a general review of the women's situation in Nepal on the basis of available secondary data and deals with women and tourism as it relates to their work burden, participation in decision making, and benefit sharing at both micro-and macro-levels. Chapter three concentrates on the local case studies of the men and women involved in and affected by tourism in Dhampus VDC in the Annapurna Area. Chapter four introduces ACAP as an example of induced development initiative and analyses its three components related to women. Chapter five identifies the prevailing gender gaps at various levels and the final Chapter, six, posits a set of recommendations based on the situational analysis presented by the study.

Women and Tourism

Women's Situation

According to the 1991 population census (CBS 1993), 9.24 million, or about 50.3 per cent of the total population of the 18.46 million in Nepal, are women. While women exceed in numbers, they fall seriously short of men in terms of accepted socioeconomic indicators. The average life expectancy of females in Nepal (53 years) is lower than that of males (56.1 years). The female literacy rate is only 25 per cent compared to 55 per cent for males. Only 36 per cent of the primary school students were female as of 1990. Enrollments in lower secondary and secondary schools are even less and stand at 30 per cent and 28 per cent respectively. Similarly, only 12.2 per cent of the primary school teachers are female (CBS 1993). The plight of mountain women can be expected to be even worse than the general national statistics on women, mainly because of the lack of development infrastructure.

Women's Work Burden

Women in Nepal are traditionally relegated to domestic work. Women generally do much more work than men within the traditional domains. They carry out all the household chores such as cooking meals, fetching water, collecting firewood and fodder, and cleaning and washing. Although their contribution to the agricultural sector is tremendous, their work is merely considered to be an extension of the household domain and is thereby grossly misrepresented as unproductive.

Bennet and Acharya (1982) found that the women of Nepal put in substantially more time (9.9 hours per day) in all activities than men who put in on average only 5.9 hours per day. A study on the Parbatiya women of Bakundol village concluded that *"when only the direct production activities are concerned, women are responsible for 60 per cent of the time input; when both production and family maintenance functions are included, women's relative time input reaches 72 per cent of the total"* (Bennet 1981). The larger time input of women in Nepalese households is also confirmed by the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) Multipurpose Household Budget Survey conducted in 1984/85. According to the survey, the total hours spent in conventional economic activities,

subsistence economic activities, and domestic activities are higher for women than for men in all rural and urban areas of the mountains, hills, and *terai* (Table 1).

Table 1: Time Use Patterns of Household Members (in Hours)

Selected Activities	Terai				Hill				Mountain Rural	
	Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban		F	M
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M		
Conventional Economic Activity	1.70	5.10	1.32	5.90	2.68	4.21	1.90	5.19	3.57	4.70
Subsistence Economic Activity	1.86	0.95	1.10	0.34	2.54	1.61	1.27	0.41	2.43	1.80
Domestic	5.84	1.79	6.48	1.59	5.39	2.47	5.61	1.41	5.23	2.19
Total	9.40	7.84	8.90	7.83	10.61	7.89	8.78	7.08	11.23	8.69

(Source: Multipurpose Household Budget Survey, 1984/85)

The NRB (1989) survey also shows significantly higher working hours for females even below the age of 15.

In recent years, however, the number of women in the mountains involved in household activities has slightly declined. Their involvement in portering and marketing activities has increased to some extent. Male participation in domestic work has shown some increases. Mountain tourism has offered scope for diversifying the participation and involvement of women in favour of non-traditional activities. The most encouraging trend is the increased exposure of women to marketing activities.

The general development of public utilities, such as drinking water, particularly in the tourist areas has generally eased the burden of women. As a result, most women have experienced an increase in productivity. This increase in productivity, however, has barely been translated into an improved nutrition status for women. The depletion of forest resources in the mountain trekking areas and lack of alternative sources of energy, on the other hand, have increased the time women spend in the collection of fodder and fuelwood.

Women's Employment in the Tourism Sector

Tourism has probably the greatest potential for off-farm employment activities in the mountains. This has important implications for women. Besides the direct

employment provided in the organised sector, which includes travel/trekking agencies, hotels, restaurants, and lodges; trekking, or mountain tourism also provides indirect employment through the increased demand for services in the informal sector (e.g., tea shops and lodges) along the trekking trails.

Mountain tourism with its linkages with the local farming system, can provide indirect income generation and employment opportunities to farm households in the mountain areas along the trekking routes. The employment rate of women in the direct and formal sectors within tourism has been very low and their involvement is often invisible and unaccounted for. However, it is quite high in the informal sector. Employment of women in the formal sector is mostly at the lower levels.

Within the formal category are "star" ranked hotels and other registered hotels, registered tour and trekking companies. The informal sector includes small teashops, guesthouses along trekking routes, portering, etc. It also includes employment that may not be directly related to tourism but which has been brought about by tourism, e.g., agricultural industries and transport and communication services.

Information on employment in the tourism sector provided by the Rastra Bank Survey (NRB 1990) covered all airline, travel, trekking agencies, and 81 per cent of the hotels/lodges/guesthouses. This study found 11,176 people to be directly employed in the tourism sector. Female employment was concentrated in hotel/lodges (13.8%); followed by travel agencies (8.5%), airlines (8.4%), and trekking agencies (3.2%).

The second survey by CEDA (1991) of the workforce in accommodation, catering, and travel/trekking, rafting agencies indicates the following.

- Out of a total of 24,524 people employed in the accommodation sector, 12.5 per cent are women. The total industry employment ratio is 81.2 per cent male compared to 18.8 per cent female. The guesthouses and lodges employed the highest proportion of women (35%), while safari resorts in Chitwan employed the lowest proportion of women (2.8%).
- At the lowest level of low/unskilled workers, women account for 18 per cent of the employees, whereas at the highest level, as managers, only six per cent are women.
- Most women are employed in the housekeeping section (42.7%) compared to sales and marketing (19.4%), front office (13.2%), and accounts/administration (6.6%).

Two months' employment data showed that only 12.9 per cent of new workers recruited were women.

The CEDA study shows a total workforce of 3,540 employed in organised travel, trekking, and rafting businesses in Nepal (Table 2). Of this number, 298 are female, constituting 8.4 per cent of the total workforce. Female employment constituted 10.6 per cent in travel agencies, five per cent in trekking agencies, and four per cent in rafting agencies.

Of the total of 298 females employed in tourism-related agencies, 115 (38.6%) are working at the middle levels, 89 (30%) at basic level, 69 (23%) at management level, and 25 (8.4 percent) at the lower level (Ministry of Tourism, 1990).

Table 2: Employment by Type of Establishment

Establishment	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Travel Agency	1,975	89.4	235	10.6	2,210
Trekking Agency	924	95.0	49	5.0	973
Rafting Agency	343	96.0	14	4.0	357
Airline	2,109	89.1	257	10.9	2,366
Accommodation/catering	19,913	81.2	4,611	18.8	24,524
Total	25,264	83.0	5,166	17.0	30,430

Source : CEDA 1991

The above employment data reveal that the opportunities available for women in the Tourism Sector are very limited and mostly concentrated in the urban areas. Considering the fact that more than two-thirds of Nepal is covered by mountains; that over 90 per cent of the population live in rural areas; that over 50 per cent of the total population of Nepal are women; and that women form the backbone of the economy; the benefits of tourism should be directly impacting the lives of mountain women. Available data do not support this contention.

Women's work in the Tourism Sector is concentrated in the following areas which remain largely invisible.

- Providing lodging facilities for tourists
- Petty trading
- Traditional crafts and weaving/selling
- Cultural programmes; singing and dancing.

Besides the above, there are some serious negative effects of tourism on women. Although no studies exist, tourism in urban areas is leading to an increase in women prostitutes. The victims of this have been the poorest women because of their abject poverty. Mostly ignorant, illiterate, and unexposed girls are the victims of prostitution, including trafficking to India.

Factors Influencing Women's Participation in Tourism

The following proceeding analysis based on secondary information clearly establishes the fact that women have not received benefits from tourism on an equitable basis.

There is no well-defined theory concerning how women and men relate to each other or how these relationships are built upon in the overall configuration of society. We know, however, that gender relations are not randomly structured but are inspired by economic and political arrangements as well as by ideology. Then it becomes an analysis of how wider social, political, cultural, and economic factors intersect to provoke structural responses that reinforce the gender stereotypes.

In this context, the limitations that a woman faces in general may be set to also influence their anticipation in tourism. Broadly speaking, these are:

- the system of patriarchy which looks upon women as subordinate to men and assigns them roles and responsibilities within the prescribed limits;
- religious traditions and rituals that reinforce the subordinate role of women;
- cultural factors that define norms and different sets of behaviour for men and women;
- invisibility of women's work which is assigned within the domestic sphere leading to the non-accountability of such work;
- women's excessive workload both within the household and outside;
- lack of education, information, and training;
- lack of self-esteem, leadership, and entrepreneurial capacity; and
- lack of access to credit and resources.

There are also cases in which women's involvement in tourism has been encouraged. For example, ACAP's Women's Development Programme aims to provide women with greater opportunities and independence by teaching them new skills and helping them to generate income on their own. ACAP has been implementing a Developing Women's Entrepreneurship in Tourism (DWET) programme launched by HMG with financial assistance from UNDP/ILO. This project is specifically geared towards developing the entrepreneurial skills of women and to equipping them to use available opportunities in the field of tourism.

From the very beginning, women have been purposively targetted in the DWET project. One of the prominent features of DWET is the provision, in flexible terms, of the loans to women to carry out various income-generating activities of their respective choice without being restrictive in terms of collateral requirements, or areas of activities, or group formation. Such restrictions are widely applied by other financing and development agencies such as the Banks, SFDP, and PCRW.

The selection criteria for DWET trainees are very gender sensitive in the sense that the selection is participatory and based on intensive consultations. This approach has also helped to avoid intervention from influential village leaders. Development of entrepreneurship skills needs to be supervised and monitored intensively. The DWET programme offers full-time trainers and facilitators who play a crucial role in assisting women to gain confidence and experience in mountain tourism enterprises as their priority occupation.

Although DWET training has been successful in its attempt to make tourism enterprises more accessible to women, it also has critical shortcomings. The most visible shortcoming is in the area of establishing linkages between training and follow-up activities, which seem to have been overlooked.

The Ministry of Tourism with financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank has been implementing the Tourism Infrastructure Project since 1992. Eco-tourism, a circuit trekking project, is one of six programme components under TIDP.

Eco-tourism stresses the enhancement of trekking experience while safeguarding the social, cultural, and natural quality of tourism destinations. It

is based on the concept that the revenue generated through tourism activities will assist conservation programmes without affecting the tourism experience.

The goal of bringing economic independence to women cannot be attained if the programme is not carefully planned to incorporate all aspects of entrepreneurship development in a holistic and integrated manner. For example, for women who are completely new to the tourism business, skill development training alone cannot ensure their ability to use the training received for income generation, especially in rural Nepal. They have to be trained, guided, and prepared to enable them to enter the already competitive tourism industry.

Dhampus is one of the villages in ACAP where the DWET programme has been implemented. It is for this reason that this village has been selected for an in-depth study to assess the impacts and implications of tourism on women.

The Dhampus Study

Objectives of the Dhampus study

Relatively little is known about tourism and its impact on the lives of women, let alone about their own views on the situation. A case study was conducted in Dhampus VDC, Kaski district, a tourist area to understand how women's lives have been influenced by economic and social changes brought about by tourism. Men's views were also solicited regarding the changing situation of women resulting from the new economic and development opportunities afforded by tourism.

The main objective of the study conducted at Dhampus was to establish how tourism has affected and influenced the lives of women across ethnic, economic, and social groups living in the village; particularly in reference to work burdens; opening up of off-farm opportunities and income generation; their roles in household and community resource management; decision-making; social and economic status; and other gender related issues.

Dhampus village was selected as the study site because it is one of the most popular tourist trekking areas of Nepal where trekking tourism has been operating for almost the last thirty years.

Dhampus is also under the jurisdiction of the ACAP and a site for the DWET programme. Dhampus is only twenty-five kilometres north of Pokhara and about two hours walk from the nearest road head.

Methodology Used for the Dhampus Study

The study in Dhampus focussed on the evaluation of impacts and the implication of tourism on local women. It also looked at existing limitations and the barriers confronted by local women in the face of a rapidly growing lucrative industry. An attempt was made to evaluate the changing socioeconomic position of village women in reference to their autonomy, access to resources and opportunities, and the options available to them in this situation.

In Dhampus sixty-one households were surveyed. The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique and the oral testimony method were used to collect most of the data. In order to solicit the balanced opinions of the local people, extensive formal and informal interviews and discussions were held with groups representing a cross section of the community both in terms of ethnicity (*Gurung, Brahmin/Chhetri, Kami/Damai*) as well as occupation and economic status (Tables 3 and 4). In addition, focus group meetings with an "all women group" and other participatory meetings with both men and women, amongst whom were community leaders, social leaders, and development practitioners, were also held. Similarly, interviews with other organisations working in the area, such as the VDC (Village Development Committee), Police Check Post, LARC (Lumle Agriculture and Research Centre) as well as the ACAP, were conducted. While conducting the study, an attempt was made to note down the exact statements made by the interviewees and present them in their original forms as far as possible.

Table 3: Interviewees according to Ethnicity and Gender

S.No.	Ethnic Group	Female	Male	Total
1	<i>Gurung</i>	16	15	31
2	<i>Brahmin/Chhetri</i>	8	9	17
3	<i>Kami/Damai</i>	11	2	13
Total				61

Table 4: Interviewees according to Occupation

Occupation	<i>Gurung</i>	<i>Brahmin/Chhetrie</i>	<i>Kami/Damai</i>
Entrepreneurs	12	5	1
Porters	1	-	1
Wage Labourers	-	1	-
Petty Traders	-	-	1
Tourist Guides	1	-	-
Police	-	2	-
Farmers	17	20	10
Total	31	17	13

Local people, particularly women, are less accustomed to formulating ideas and feelings in a direct way. This meant long hours of personal communication. The fact that the researchers have been working for the ACAP and in Dhampus over the past few years was an immense help in conducting the study. This made it easier to relate to the local people and the situation.

A Profile of Dhampus

Dhampus is situated on the top of a ridge. From the top, one can get a most picturesque view of Machapuchare, Annapurna, and Dhaulagiri and the valley and city of Pokhara. This unique geographical setting has made Dhampus one of the most popular tourist villages in Nepal. Dhampus also serves as one of the main entry points to Annapurna Base Camp and to other parts of the Annapurna area (see Map 1). As one treks to the village the altitude rises abruptly from a height of 800m at the base to a height of 1,600 m at the top of the ridge.

The total population of Dhampus VDC is 2,920, 1,470 males and 1,455 females (Source: VDC record in 1992). But this research team found that the present population of women is much larger than that of men (Table 5) as men have temporarily or permanently migrated to the big cities in search of work to supplement incomes (Table 6). Thus, the permanent residents and the resource users and managers of the area are women, children, retired ex-army men (usually above the age of forty-five) and the *Kami/Damai* (occupational castes).

Table 5: Population of Dhampus VDC, 1992

No. of Households	Population in VDC Record			Present Population		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
588	1455	1470	2925	1297	1469	2766

Source: VDC. Record (1992)

The *Gurung* form a dominant group in Dhampus, followed by the *Brahmin/Chhetri*, *Kami/Damai*, and a few *Magar*. The *Gurung* have their own dialect. Prior to the advent of trekking tourism in this area the villagers were subsistence farmers, and the majority of men, mainly *Gurung*, joined either the British or the Indian armies. *Brahmin* and *Chhetri* men too have migrated

LOCATION OF DHAMPUS

Map 1



temporarily to the big cities in India in search of wage labour. The temporary migration trend is still very strong, but today youths prefer to work in Japan, Korea, Germany, and in the Arabian countries rather than join an army. Remittances and pensions from foreign military services are the main source of off-farm income and the *Gurung* families mainly have access to such incomes. These incomes are also the main factors in bringing about changes in the traditional farming system. Men and women from the *Kami/Damai* groups rarely migrate out and they form the main labour force in agriculture.

Table 6: Migration: Dhampus VDC

Country	Migrants by Nature of Work		
	Army	Other (mainly wage labour)	Total
India	69	45	114
Britain	17	-	17
Germany	-	8	8
Japan	-	9	9
S. Arabia	-	7	7
Korea	-	1	1
Malaysia	-	3	3
Total	86	73	159

Source: Field Study 1994.

The literacy rate among women is very low in the area. The majority of women above the age of fifty are illiterate. The literacy rate is very low even among elderly men. There is one high school in the area. The condition of this school is very good. The government provides funds for the primary and secondary classes of this high school. Most of the costs for running the senior school (Standards VIII, XI, and X) are provided by the Tamagawa University of Japan. Members of this university decided to support this school while trekking in the Annapurna Base Camp in 1985. Besides this high school, there is one middle school and four primary schools. From the interviews it was found that there is a very high level of consciousness amongst parents about the value of education for both boys and girls. The attendance of *Kami/Damai* children (the occupational castes) in the schools, however, is comparatively low. An interest among illiterate adult women to learn to read and write was observed. The government and NGOs working in the area have already conducted ten Adult Literacy Classes (ALC) in the last seven years in the various wards of the VDC. Women have also shown an interest in post-literacy classes.

The basic infrastructure of the area, considering the Nepali rural context, is in a fairly good condition. The trails are well maintained and are regularly repaired/upgraded by the villagers, especially by the *Ama toli*, the local women's group. The first drinking water system was constructed with the assistance of the Indian Ex-Servicemen's Welfare Centre in 1972. Only two water tanks were built. The villagers still had to walk a long distance to collect drinking water. Then, in 1980, LARC (Lumle Agricultural Research Centre) with financial assistance from the Kadoori Project constructed two more tanks and installed five tap stands. The drinking water problem is still very acute. The government is currently in the process of constructing a drinking water system, which is to be completed by 1996. The sanitary condition of the area is remarkably good. With the exception of the *Kami/Damai* homes, almost all the households have toilets.

Trekking Tourism in Dhampus

Arrival of Tourists

The exact year of tourist arrival in Dhampus is not recorded. The elderly villagers of Dhampus remember seeing one or two foreigners in the village around the year 1960/61. Mr. Paush Br. *Gurung* (aged sixty) related his first encounter with a tourist.

"One late afternoon in November, around the year 1961, one gora (white man) arrived in my village and asked if I could accommodate him in my house. I showed him the room but he preferred to sleep on the veranda. He had his own sleeping bag. I offered him dinner and tea. The next morning he shook hands with me and left. I did not charge him any money."

As tourism started to develop, changes started to take place, particularly in the infrastructure of the area. Trails were constructed and upgraded, houses were either extended or new ones were built. The two villagers, Mr. Govinda Br. Bhandari, aged sixty-two, and Durga Br. Gurung, aged sixty-eight, remember their village.

"The present main trekking trail was in a very bad condition. It was very steep and was not often used. It was when Dal Bahadur's (present VDC chairman) father and Tham Bahadur's father were travelling back home from Pokhara that they felt the

need to construct a more permanent trail for villagers and foreign tourists to walk on. Around 1960/61, the entire village got together and constructed a more permanent trail. After the trail was made, the number of tourists started increasing slowly."

By the year 1965, the number of tourists visiting the place had increased slowly. During this time there were no local shops and lodges. The villagers had to travel to Pokhara to buy salt, sugar, oil, etc. The first tea shop was opened by Mr. Kaskeli Shaila (*Brahmin*) in Dhampus-Deorali around 1972. In the beginning he did not involve his wife in the shop, but soon, this being the only shop in the area, tourists started pouring in and he brought his wife along to help him. He earned enough money to leave the village and migrate to Pokhara. In 1974, Mr. Man Bdr. *Gurung* opened the first lodge in Dhampus and named it the Alpine Lodge. Unlike Kaskili Shaila, he involved his wife and daughters from the beginning. His wife, Mrs. Maya *Gurung*, related her experiences.

"Our house was down in the village and my husband opened the lodge on top of the hill. We stayed there only when the tourists came. The rest of the time we used to be busy on the farm. During those days, since we were the only lodge owners, word about our lodge soon spread everywhere. The tourist guides used to come searching for us in the field or at home asking to be let in. I did the cooking and cleaning while my husband dealt with the tourists and the accounts. When there were many guests he also helped me in the kitchen. We kept no beds, all the tourists used to sleep on the floor. We did not charge them for lodging but made some profit on the meals. Sometimes the tourists would come inside the kitchen and cook themselves. I slowly learned to cook western food from them."

After running the lodge for a few years, they sold it to a fellow villager. During those days, though one could earn enough money from the lodge business, it was not considered to be a very noble occupation. Operating lodges and tea shops entailed "*washing strangers' dishes*" and was not considered a proper business. Wage labour for the lodges was difficult to find as people preferred to work in the fields and in the houses of the '*Mukhia*' (village headman). But pressure from the tourists and the income earned from the lodge business encouraged the villagers to open more lodges and tea shops. The villagers soon realised that with a little capital investment and less physical work they could

earn money to last them the whole year. In the early days, there was no competition and tourists were willing to stay in any type of lodge.

In Dhampus, the development of tourism was mainly in the accommodation and catering sectors. The villagers started building their houses and lodges on the ridge (hill top) which before was considered to be unproductive land, cold, forested, and with no facilities (trails, drinking water, etc). Slowly, the villagers from the lower more fertile land began to move to the higher uncultivated area which commanded a good view. Thus tourism developed in this area at the **cost of the environment**. The once thick forest with abundant wildlife and natural vegetation was slowly cleared to build lodges and houses. Today, these lodge owners are among the wealthiest villagers and have a high status in the village. Even the so-called upper class families have now started the lodge business. Mr. Ram Bahadur *Gurung* (aged seventy) remembers how Deorali, the main tourist area of Dhampus, has changed over the years.

"Basanta Lodge area used to be forested, jungle fowl were abundant, and one could see them even during the day. We used to come here to collect fuelwood. My father had 'khoriya' (shifting cultivation) land here. Other villagers too had this type of land. After the villagers started building houses here, I too built mine on my father's khoriya land. I never imagined that this unproductive and cold land on the ridge would be like a gold mine for us. Of course, it is sad that all the forest is gone today. We have planted tree saplings with help from the ACAP office."

None of the lodges and restaurants in Dhampus has received an incentive from the government. They began on their own initiative. Today, there are fourteen lodges and thirteen tea shops and many (small and big ones) are coming up every year. Until 1991, Dhampus had been enjoying all the benefits of trekking tourism. But, in 1989, the construction of the Pokhara-Baglung highway was like a blow to the tourism industry here. Dhampus used to be the entry point and the first stopover for the trekker. With completion of the highway, tourists can reach Dhampus within two and a half hours from Pokhara. Today tourists very rarely stay overnight here, instead they halt for the night at Pothana, a village above Dhampus. For the local people of Dhampus, who are mostly dependent on direct tourism-related enterprises, mainly accommodation and catering, this situation has been a matter of great concern. Besides, the other entry points, such as Nayapool below Birethanti, are being used more frequently by tourists. According to the police checkpost record, there were

12,101 tourists that came through Dhampus in 1993 and the majority of them did not stay there. The lodge owners feel that this year there was a distinct fall in the number of tourists coming to Dhampus.

Situation of Women in the Study Area Prior to the Advent of Tourism

Generally, in Nepal, the status and role of women in society vary across ethnic groups (*Gurung*, *Brahmin/Chhetri*, and *Kami/Damai*). However, in Dhampus, the degree of variation was not very significant. This was largely due to the influence of the majority group (*Gurung*) upon the minority. Traditionally, the *Gurung* women have a higher status in society than those of *Brahmin/Chhetri*, and *Kami/Damai* women. They have less restrictions placed upon them and have more freedom of movement. The traditional women's group, the *Ama toli*, (literally, the Mother's Group), which performs cultural programmes and raises funds for various purposes, is a good example. In normal circumstances, for *Brahmin/Chhetri* women to dance in front of strangers and villagers is taboo, but, in Dhampus, even prior to the advent of tourism development, these women were found to participate in these cultural programmes. Today, with exposure and awareness through tourism development and the various external interventions, both the *Brahmin/Chhetri* women and the *Kami/Damai* women actively participate in the women's group and even perform cultural programmes to raise funds.

Besides, the trend of either seasonal, temporary, or permanent migration of men at the most productive period of their lives has left women with no choice but to cope and adjust to the new situation all by themselves.

Women's Place in the Household

Prior to the arrival of tourists and external interventions in the area, women performed traditional work such as domestic chores, child care, collecting fuelwood/fodder, fetching drinking water and, in the fields, sowing, weeding, harvesting, food processing, etc. There was a very clear division of labour. In this traditional setting, women devised their own coping strategies for survival. The workload of *Brahmin/Chhetri* women generally exceeded that of women from other ethnic groups, because of restrictions placed on women's "outside" involvement. **Mrs. Hari Maya Adhikari (fifty years)**, a *Brahmin* woman who experienced the work burden and structures imposed upon women in a *Brahmin* household reflects upon this situation. She is now the owner and manager of Deorali Restaurant in Dhampus.

"When I was a young daughter in-law, my day started at four in the morning and, right after I got up, I had to go and fetch drinking water from the spring which was on the outskirts of the village. I used to go together with other women from the neighbourhood. We never went alone. Along with the household chores, we had to collect fodder/fuelwood and help on the farm. By the time I went to bed it would be 10/12 at night. I often used to do the grinding work at night. My mother in-law gave me instructions. I could never go anywhere according to my own wishes, even if it was for work. There was no freedom. Today, when I think of those days I get shivers down my spine. For young women these days, they have much more freedom and less work. Water taps are close by, and the lodge owners have made it even easier by installing water taps close to the houses and this has benefitted the other villagers too. There are rice mills in the village. Farm work has decreased. There are other options for earning money, e.g., selling surplus vegetables, eggs, chickens, opening tea shops, restaurants, etc. I am glad that the tourists come to my village as I don't have to go out to the fields and can remain inside the house and earn enough. I hate farm work."

Most women, even with sons and husbands serving in the army, had to toil hard. The income earned by them was often used to buy more agricultural land or to build houses. This meant more work for the women. Men came home for very short periods of time and did not share the work burden. *Gurung* women wove sheep wool blankets and cotton or nettle fibre clothes and bags, but never sold them.

The *Kami/Damai* women had to contribute to, and provide part of, the family's income. They had to "supplement" their husband's income by working either as labourers in the fields or by contributing labour in the shared cropping system (for which they had to work from dawn till dusk), or by sewing clothes, etc. They received very little wages and those too mostly in the form of cereals. They remained responsible for the household work, giving them a double burden. Their roles as income earners, however important for the family income, was considered secondary to their roles as wives and mothers.

With limited or almost non-existent external interventions, the lives of women were very hard and their contribution, however high, to tending the household was overlooked. Their work was limited to domestic work, agriculture, and

livestock. No opportunities existed for them to earn their livelihood in a more effortless way. In monetary matters, women were totally dependent upon men.

Among the *Gurung*, however, women generally kept the money in the household. There was transparency in the family's income. Both men and women consulted each other about expenditure of money. However, since the money was earned by men, they had the freedom of spending it any way they wanted. As a retired ex-army man's wife (55 yrs) put it:

"I am just the trustworthy guard for our money. I have to give my husband whatever money he wants though I know what it is used for. I have never used the money without consulting or getting his approval."

Brahmin/Chhetri women on the other hand are not keepers of the family's income. In most cases, women do not know how much money the family has, and they have no say in its use either. Like the *Gurung*, the *Kami/Damai* women too keep the family's money but have no control over it. Among the three ethnic groups, *Gurung* women had the most access to resources although no control over them. The two other ethnic groups had limited access and no control over the resources at the household level. Although the status of *Gurung* women was fairly high, compared to that of *Brahmin/Chhetri* and *Kami/Damai* women, they still did not have a say in the decision-making process and had to perform all the traditional "women's work".

Women's Place in the Community

Until ten years' ago there were no women members on the local committees, e.g., the Drinking Water Committee, Potato Development Committee, Forest User's Committee, etc. Women were never consulted and had no role in decision-making or in the planning processes for community development activities. Women's contributions to these activities were limited to volunteer labour. During the interviews carried out by study team members from the Potato Development Project (SATA/HMG, active around 1990), the majority of the men were aware of the objectives and purposes of the project. When similar questions were asked of the women, all they knew was that "one foreigner stayed in the village for a couple of years and distributed good variety potato tubers".

Traditionally *Gurung* women had a mother's group which usually sang religious songs on special occasions, such as festivals, marriages, and death ceremonies,

for guests and raised funds. These funds were used to buy community utensils, repair school buildings, and so on. In most cases, the funds were spent on community picnics during the agricultural off-season. The women's groups were not very well organised and had no role in the decision-making processes for community development activities. Even the *Ama Toli* was absent from among the other two ethnic groups.

The only area in community-related issues in which women's involvement and decision-making was significant was regarding disputes related to social problems such as teenage pregnancies, infidelities, etc. These issues were often very sensitive so men usually tried to shirk away from such responsibilities and women were always kept in the forefront on such matters.

Thus, on the whole, the status of women prior to the advent of tourism in the community and in the household was no better than that of mountain women in other areas.

Implication of Tourism Interventions for Women

With the advent of tourism many changes have taken place in the lives of the women. These external interventions have revolutionised the once monotonous lifestyle of the local people here, especially that of women. If before their lives were centred around the household and farm work, now numerous off-farm opportunities are available in which women can participate. For the majority of local women, tourism (together with development services) has been a blessing in disguise. The women themselves are aware that it has created a niche for them for employment opportunities. It has also relieved them of the drudgery related to unpaid farm work. There has been a clear shift in employment for women from farm work to off-farm opportunities.

In Dhampus, tourism development was a result of the local response to meet tourists' needs. The local people, who traditionally are subsistence farmers, have no specific skills, and neither are they great entrepreneurs. Besides direct tourism-related job opportunities, such as lodges, tea shops, etc, the local people have not been able to benefit from the other off-farm opportunities available.

Tourism-related Activities

In the context of Dhampus, the impact of tourism is limited and variable according to the ethnicity and the economic standards of the local people.

Tourism development in Dhampus can be broadly divided into two categories.

- **Direct tourism-related activities:** represented by lodges, tea-shops, cold-drinks'/consumer stores, and petty trade.
- **Indirect tourism-related activities:** consisting of horticulture and vegetable farming, fuelwood selling, alcohol brewing, wage labour, livestock and poultry raising.

Direct Impact of Tourism-related Activities

Off-farm Opportunities

- **Lodge keeping:** The lodge business requires a substantial amount of capital and is dominated by the economically rich group, mainly *Gurung* families. This is because they can make large capital investments, either from their pensions or from remittances from the army. For women, it is easy to enter into the lodge business as they already have expertise in the management of household work. In the beginning, the lodge business meant provision of a place to sleep, a hot meal, and warm water for bathing for incoming tourists. Today, with competition among the lodge owners to attract more tourists, this business has become an expensive affair, especially for women who do not have control over the household money. Tourists tend to stay in the lodges with better facilities. Out of the 29 lodges and tea shops, 4 lodges and 2 restaurants are solely owned and managed by women - this accounts for 35 per cent in Dhampus village.
- **Tea shops, restaurants, portering etc:** Other direct tourism-related enterprises, such as teashops, restaurants, petty trade, and portering, do not require large capital investments. *Brahmin/Chhetri* women are mostly involved in teashops and petty trade. For the *Kami/Damai*, a wide range of off-farm job opportunities has arisen from tourism, but these often demand heavy physical work. Portering, both for tourists and local entrepreneurs, is carried out by this group, except in a very few cases where *Brahmin/Chhetri* porters are involved too. Their women often carry the goods for lodges and teashops from the nearest roadhead and take back empty soft-drink bottles to the roadhead.

Out of the twenty-nine lodges, teashops, restaurants, and consumer shops in Dhampus village, five lodges, four teashops, and two restaurant cum-camping

sites are solely owned and managed by women and the rest are all jointly managed or supported by them (Table 7).

Table 7: Establishments in Dhampus VDC

Establishments	Male Managed	Female Managed	Total
Lodge	9	5	14
Tea Shops/Restaurants	7	8	15
Total	16	13	29

Women's Workload and Off-farm Opportunities

- **Decrease in Farm Work:** Women involved in the lodge business no longer engage in agriculture, except during the peak agricultural season. When asked if this diversion has increased or decreased their work burden, their response is typically as follows:

"It is fun to go back to the fields, especially during Asad (June/July - tourist off-season), when all the village women are involved in sowing. It is just a matter of ten/fifteen days. We can at least meet all the women and chat with them while working."

For the women who were used to physically demanding work on the farm, where one is exposed to the sun, rain, and wind, working in lodges is a blessing.

- **Time Saving Technologies:** The increased number of tourists in the area also increased the number of lodges and the demand for better facilities. Equipped with tourism income, the neo-entrepreneurs were capable of investing in time-saving technologies or essential utilities. The water system was installed close to their houses. They built toilets. Rice mills were established in the village. Slowly and without any fanfare the standard of living of the local people began to rise. The availability and improvement of these facilities have helped to reduce women's workload.

Sharing of Work Load: In the lodges and teashops, men also share the kitchen work, especially during the rush hours. Even among the *Brahmin/Chhetri*, men were found assisting their women in areas which before were considered as only "women's work". Even during the peak tourist season, the women in the lodges were not overburdened with work as the tourists only arrived in the evenings.

The "rush hours" are only in the mornings and evenings and women can still find free time during the day. Women can rest or attend to their children, weave, and do other odd jobs in the day time . Thus, among the women involved in this category of business, the work load has been drastically reduced. Laxmi Kumari *Gurung* of the Annapurna Lodge, who started with a teashop about twenty-three years ago and later converted it into a lodge, related her experience.

"When we started the tea shop, my husband assisted me only when he had some free time. After running the tea shop for fourteen years, we earned enough money and decided to open a lodge. I managed the kitchen while he dealt with the tourists and accounts. Peak trekking season was the busiest time. I used to go to bed at around 12:00 every night, but was free during the day. But this was only for four to five months in a year. The rest of the year it is quite relaxed. I prefer running the lodge rather than working on the farm. My health has improved, and I don't get headaches any more, as I don't have to work in the sun for long hours. My husband also helps me in the kitchen when there are many guests. We women do not have to toil hard in the fields, we get lots of free time besides. Unlike earlier times, society does not look down upon lodge owners, but instead respects us."

The seasonal pattern of tourist arrivals has also played a significant role in decreasing the workload of women, especially those involved in the lodges and teashops. During the tourist off-season women spend time performing household chores and helping in the farm work.

The increase in the living standard of women engaged in tourism and relief from the drudgery of hard physical work have influenced the other women of the village too. Women's working conditions have slowly changed for the better.

Indirect Impact of Tourism-related Activities

Tourism has indirectly created a number of opportunities. A slow shift from farming to other income-generating activities is observed. Though traditional agriculture is neglected, the villagers still have not taken up horticulture, portering, and petty trading as full time occupations.

Off-Farm Opportunities

- **Horticulture:** Due to the increased demand for fresh vegetables and fruits by the lodges and tourists, the villagers have started kitchen gardens and horticulture in their backyards. Locally-produced vegetables are locally consumed and the surplus sold to lodge owners or camping tourists. *Brahmin/Chhetri* women are mostly involved in this occupation. However, horticulture is not considered to be a main source of income by the villagers and regular supplies are not available for "group tourists" and lodges. As a result, vegetables and fruits are usually brought from Pokhara.
- **Petty Trade:** In many instances women, mainly *Kami/Damai* and *Brahmin/Chhetri*, are involved in petty trading. They collect eggs, seasonal fruits, and vegetables from local farmers and sell them to lodge owners, tourists, and the local people.
- **Domestic Help:** Unlike in the past, working as a **domestic helper** is not considered to be a humiliating job by the villagers. In the lodges, women are hired as dish washers and to do the laundry. Women from the poor *Gurung* and *Brahmin/Chhetri* households are involved in this occupation. The *Kami/Damai* are not involved in this occupation as they are still considered to be an untouchable group in traditional communities such as the one in Dhampus.
- **Fuelwood selling:** *Kami/Damai* women are involved in **selling fuelwood**. The lodge/restaurant owners and some wealthy households of retired elderly people buy the fuelwood. A basket (*doko*) of fuelwood costs Nepalese Rupees thirty-five and takes almost one whole day to collect. The fuelwood is usually sold by people from the neighbouring (non-trekking area) villages.
- **Brewing and Selling Alcohol:** There has been a rapid growth in this occupation due to tourism development. In most cases, poor *Gurung*

women are involved in this business. Porters who come along with "group tourists" are the main customers. During the tourist season, alcohol is distilled in substantial quantities and plenty of fuelwood is used.

- **Wage Labour:** a) As a result of off-farm opportunities and male out-migration, agricultural lands are left fallow. Wealthy families either give their farmland for "*adhiya*" (share cropping) or they hire wage labourers to work in the fields. In the past, the remittances and pensions were used strictly for buying land and building houses. These days, this money is also used for running the household. Mrs. Dhan Maya *Gurung* (seventy years) commented on today's women.

"In my time we were not allowed to enjoy the money earned by our husbands in the army. It was either used to buy land or kept in the safety deposit box. These days women have become lazy but are lucky. They do not have to toil in the fields, if one has money, one can buy everything. With the development of roads and good trails, the city has become closer, besides there are shops in the village too."

b) With the development of tourism in the area, new houses and lodges are coming up each year and the old houses are repaired every year. The *Kami/Damai* are employed in construction work. Their women often carry construction materials. The wage rates are lower for women than for men. When asked about the differences in the rates, the answer invariably is that women work less than men.

- **Others:** With the rising living standards of the people in the area, improvements have been observed in the dietary food habits of the local people. In addition to the introduction of regular vegetables in their diet, meat is a weekly fare. Unlike other villages where buffaloes are slaughtered for meat only on special occasions, in Dhampus they are slaughtered every week. Since the village has limited livestock supplies, buffaloes have to be brought from neighbouring villages. The *Kami/Damai* are engaged in the business of supplying buffaloes for meat.

Workload

- Although numerous off-farm opportunities have arisen for the poor and lower castes, such as the *Kami/Damai*, only a very slight change has occurred in their living standards. They have not been able to benefit fully from tourism. No distinct change in the workloads of these women is seen. Tourism development has given them the lee-way to choose a job and not be exploited. As Jhapi, a *Damini* woman, put it.

"For us, bikash (development) has brought no change. It is for rich people. Without doing hard physical labour, we cannot survive. Of course, life is much better these days, as we have more work choices and some self respect. If the Bista's (higher castes) are not paying well and exploit us, we can bargain, as there are numerous options for other jobs. Previously, we had no choice but had to agree to whatever they said. This is the only good thing about the so-called bikash. If bikash was for us then we would have more land, good houses, and less work, but see how we live? So, in my opinion, I see no improvements."

The trend for using pensions and remittances earned from the army in household management, instead of buying land for agriculture, has contributed to reducing the workload of women. This is true for the *Gurung* women mostly.

For the *Brahmin* women too, the workload has decreased slightly, as the total dependency on agriculture is reducing and has been supplemented by the off-farm opportunities created by tourism development.

Thus, with the development of tourism in Dhampus, the workload of women has definitely decreased. The sharing of work by their men; more choices and job opportunities; and a tourist off-season, along with external interventions, are perfect examples of the impact of tourism on women's lives. Together with the decrease in their workload, their health and sanitation conditions have also significantly improved. It must be noted, however, that it is mainly the relatively well-to-do that have benefitted the most.

Socioeconomic Status and Decision-making

Exposure and interaction to the outside world and their crucial role in the family's earning position have improved the status of women in this area.

Household Management

Today, women have better access to and control in the management and running of the household. The traditional authority exercised by men, however, still remains. Even among the *Brahmin/Chhetri* women, though their men still keep the family's income, they have **easy access** to it in matters related to the management of the household. *Kami/Damai* women too have both access and complete control over the money in running the household.

Ratna Kumari Gurung of Dhaulagiri Lodge described the actual situation concerning the family's income. She has been with the lodge business for the last twelve years. She is a spinster and lives with her brother and his family. Their lodge is regarded as a first class lodge. When asked about their yearly income she was hesitant to answer.

*"Myself and my sister in-law manage the lodge. My brother does not have any hand in it as he is busy with his work. He is the VDC chairman. We are **free to do anything** in the management of the lodge. However, if it concerns major construction work, than he decides. To date he has never complained or intervened. Regarding the expenditure, we can spend up to fifteen thousand rupees without consulting him. We never ask him when buying anything for ourselves. Nonetheless, for matters concerning more than that sum we have to discuss with him and **the final decision will be his.**"*

Women Owned and Managed Enterprises

In Dhampus, among the twenty-nine enterprises, thirteen are **solely managed and owned** by women. This is not limited to one ethnic group; the *Gurung*, but *Brahmin/Chhetri*, *Kami/Damai* women are involved too.

Increase in Self-Confidence

The combined effect of the tourism industry and external development services has induced the women to become active. They have **gained confidence and are aware** of the importance of education, health, and sanitation, as well as the importance of improving their status in society. Several decisions about these issues are now taken by women, although such latitude is mostly enjoyed by *Gurung* women.

Changes in Clothing Patterns

A distinct change in the clothing pattern is observed in Dhampus. Several middle-aged women wear gowns and "salwarkurtha" (Punjabi dress) and are not ridiculed by the villagers as is the case in other areas. Mina Gurung (thirty-five years), the owner and manager of Raju lodge, explained:

"It has been many years since I started wearing gowns and "salwarkurthas". I feel more comfortable and like wearing these dresses. These days the elderly men are so used to seeing us in these dresses that they never complain. Why should they complain either? We have earned the money ourselves and it is our wish to do as we please. Of course, one should respect society too and not dress outrageously."

Participation in Meetings

Women are becoming more involved in matters outside their set traditional responsibilities. More women participate in women's meetings where they decide upon and plan programmes for community development activities.

Organisational Improvements

Traditional **Ama toli** (women's group), which were mostly passive, have become more active. With a lot of people visiting their villages, they have become successful in raising large amounts of money for development. For example, the women's group of ward # 8 has a fund of NR 96,000. The women's group has full authority over this money. They usually decide on how to invest the money. However, in some of the groups it was found that the women's group still ask for their men's decisions about programmes. In most cases, however, women initiate the programmes and later inform the men and ask for their support too. The *Brahmin/Chhetri* and *Kami/Damai* women too have begun to be active in women's group activities.

Intra-village Mobility

Since women are usually occupied during the day, their meetings are held at night. In the beginning, men showed some resistance, but, today, women do not have problems about attending the meetings. In the meetings, they discuss the use of their group fund, community development, improvement of the village, counteracting social evils, and so on.

Mobilisation of the Community

Every month the women clean the village and mobilise the whole village to participate. Gambling is a big problem among the men here. In 1993, the women's group banned gambling in the village and made rules fining any person violating the ban. They were successful in fining seven men who were caught red-handed while gambling. A member of the **Ama Toli** had this to say on women's role in community development.

*"Unlike in the past, today we can attend women's meeting without being worried about the household chores. We keep our meetings open for men. Most of the times we stay for long hours for the meetings. During our absence men stay at home and are compelled to **share the household work**. All village women attend the meeting and men have **accepted this new activity of ours**. Since we have full control over the funds we raise we can decide about their use too. Last year, we built a five hundred metre long trail with this money."*

*Sometimes, men also **invite us to their meetings** and request us to invest the group fund in community development activities. We agree only if we do not have plans for new projects.*

Caste Imbalances in Participation

In the women's group, participation in the decision-making processes is observed to be limited to the women from the so-called higher castes only. *Kami/Damai* women are totally overlooked in such matters. The status of the women in the community has not changed much with the advent of external interventions. This situation is aptly explained by Kanchi Kamini.

"In the women's group, we "Kamini" (occupational caste) have no role. The "Bista" (higher caste) women decide about funds and make the rules, we have to agree with their decisions. When it comes to singing and dancing for the cultural programmes to raise funds, voluntary labour for women-initiated development activities, etc, our participation is compulsory."

There are still contradictions that need to be overcome.

It has been observed above that, in Dhampus, tourism development and external interventions have affected the lives of women in many ways. Men from different age and ethnic groups have different views on the impact of tourism on women. Though the perceptions of men are varied, their overall view on this issue is positive.

In the beginning, the direct involvement of women in the tourism industry and in other social activities was viewed quite sceptically by men. Over time, their perceptions have begun to change. In fact, some of the activities carried out by women have also benefitted men in significant ways. For example, the trail constructed, initiated by women with the women's own funds, has become extremely useful. The older men, however, have not quite appreciated such changes in the status of women, particularly in matters of clothing, perceived lack of respect for the elderly, and interaction with tourists. One old man who has his house on the main tourist route, when asked why he had not entered the lucrative lodge business said:

"The lodge business is not our cup of tea. It is only for lower middle class people for whom interaction with strangers and the performance of catering duties does not matter. The women have become so shamelessly forward that they dare to compare themselves with us. The way they dress and the way they raise their voices at meetings is the result of tourism development in my village. Maybe the future is theirs."

Other men felt less threatened by this relative freedom of women and have appreciated the change. The decreased workload of women and better working conditions, together with increased incomes, have led to improvement in their health. There is better sanitation, better health, and better schooling in the village. Many men were found to be satisfied with these developments. The owner of Dhaulagiri Lodge, Mr. Dal Bahadur Gurung, current VDC Chairman, would not have had sufficient time for his much-cherished political job had his wife and sister not been able to manage his lodge. Such incidences abound in the village. Dal Bahadur stated:

"I am so busy in village politics that I do not have time to attend to my personal household needs. These are managed totally by my wife and sister. They themselves are earning enough money

not only to look after the house but also to meet my expenses and further increase our assets."

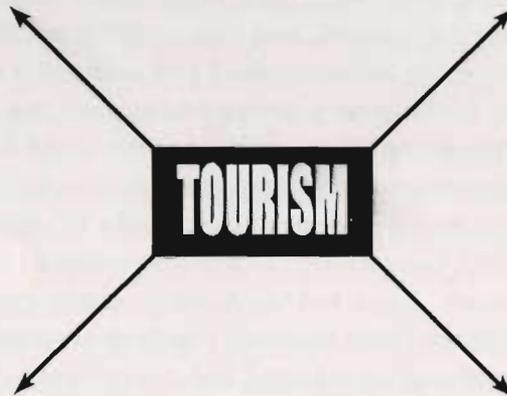
On the whole, therefore, the positive perceptions of men about the new status of women have clearly overridden some negative perceptions.

Summary

Tourism and external development interventions have brought about positive changes, but women have still not been **fully accepted as equal partners into the development process** by the community. But this has not prevented them from proving their potential. They have developed a remarkable ability to work together and to share their skills and resources. Regular cleaning of their villages, toilet building campaigns, and trail building are ideal examples. Thus, women's constant efforts to be recognised and respected in society are slowly gaining ground. The trail-building activity has been the turning point in the status of women. Since the trails are frequently used by both villagers and tourists, the work has been recognised and appreciated. Thus it can be said that the overall status and decision-making ability of women, both within the household and the community, have increased considerably. These developments, however, have not sufficiently percolated down to the poor *Brahmin/Chhetri* and lower caste women. The flow diagram presented in Figure 2 shows, in a comprehensive manner, the overall impact and implications of tourism development in Dhampus on the local women.

Figure 1: Diagrammatic Representation of the Impact of Tourism on Dhampus Women

WORK LOAD	OFF-FARM OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • off-farm activities • sharing of work load • seasonality • diversity of work • tourist arrival patterns • time-sharing technologies • influence on other women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lodges/restaurants, etc • horticulture • petty trade • fuelwood selling • wage labour/portering • consumer shops • alcohol trade • livestock/poultry



SOCIAL/ECONOMIC STATUS	DECISION MAKING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HH: more - expenditure respect - work visible • CL: more women members' involvement in meetings, ability to mobilise organised groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HH: mgmt./expenditure, education and health, mobility, clothing • CL: comm. activities vocal - women's needs

Note:

HH = Household

CL - Community level

Mgmt - Management

Gender Sensitivity in ACAP's Activities

Background

This chapter introduces the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) and its selected activities as an example of induced initiatives linked to tourism development. After a brief introduction, an attempt is made to assess gender sensitivity in ACAP's programmes at all levels - policy, programme, and implementation. The assessment has been made by using gender need indicators, i.e., practical and strategic.

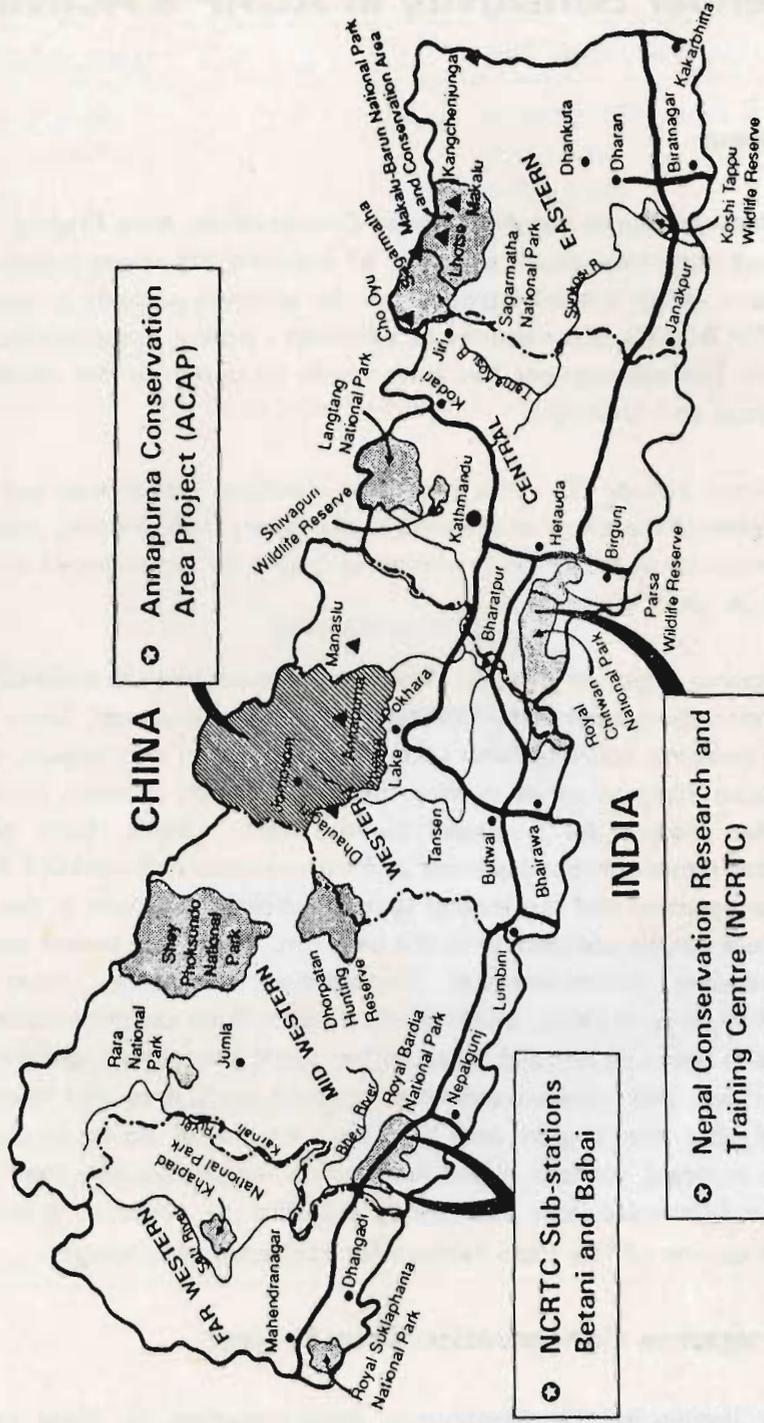
ACAP covers almost 60 VDCs and over 7,600sq. km. It was not possible to conduct research covering all the area in the given time. Hence, analysis of the gender sensitivity in ACAP programmes is based on experiences in the villages of Ghandruk and Dhampus.

The Annapurna region in western Nepal is the most heavily trekked area in the country, attracting over forty thousand tourists every year. Sixty per cent of the total trekking tourists who visit Nepal come to this region. In addition, trekkers also bring an equal number of support staff (guides, porters, and so on) to the region. As a result, by the early 1980s, both national and international development planners and conservationists realised that without proper management and monitoring systems in place, tourism in the Annapurna region would not be sustainable in the long run. This assessment was based on the increasing environmental degradation, resulting from excessive deforestation, overgrazing, and intensive agricultural practices directly related to increasing pressure on, and demand for, scarce resources on the part of the local populace and trekkers and their support staff. Ives and Messerli (1990) estimated that the region had lost half its forest cover since 1950. As elsewhere in Nepal, tourism in the Annapurna region has also been singled out as a major factor for litter and waste pollution. In addition, it has also been perceived as one of the main factors for sociocultural change.

The Annapurna Conservation Area Project

All these issues in the Annapurna region started to draw national and international attention by the early 1980s. Policy-makers and development

PROTECTED AREAS OF NEPAL



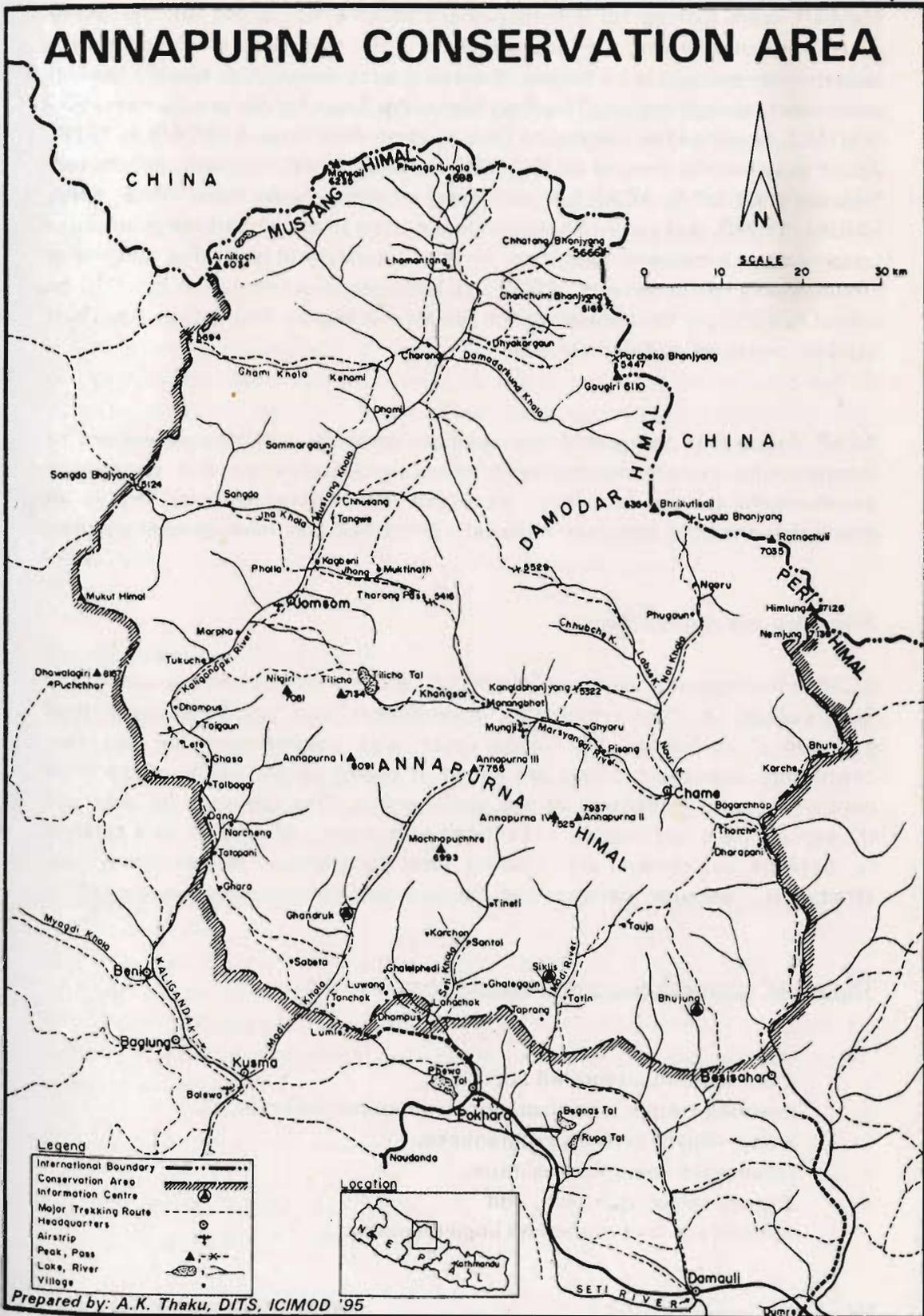
● Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP)

● NCRTC Sub-stations Betani and Babai

● Nepal Conservation Research and Training Centre (NCRTC)

● Projects of KMTNC

ANNAPURNA CONSERVATION AREA



Legend

- International Boundary
- Conservation Area
- Information Centre
- Major Trekking Route
- Headquarters
- Airstrip
- Peak, Pass
- Lake, River
- Village

Location



Prepared by: A.K. Thaku, DITS, ICIMOD '95

planners were looking for a management scheme that could address these issues without depriving the local populace of the development and economic opportunities brought in by tourism. Following a royal directive, Nepal's leading environmental organisation, The King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC), launched the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) in 1986. ACAP was initially funded by WWF-USA which is still the main contributor. Besides WWF-USA, ACAP has also been receiving funds from TRAS, SNV, KMUKT, USAID, and so on. These funds are used to implement the immediate conservation measures identified in the annual workplan. For long-term sustainability of the project, ACAP has been granted permission by HMG to collect Nrs 600 per trekker visiting the Annapurna Region. This money has been used to create an endowment fund.

ACAP devised an integrated management strategy with the objectives of incorporating tourism management, resource conservation, and community development for the benefit of local and international visitors. This is an innovative and bold approach in Nepal's protected area management system.

Principles and Approaches

ACAP is the biggest undertaking of KMTNC, and it is testing and translating the Trust's ideals, i.e., "conservation for development" and "good ecology is good economics". It views that conservation and development are not two conflicting objectives if they are aimed at balancing the needs of the local people with the protection of the environment. This can only be achieved through people's participation and local empowerment. ACAP acts as a catalyst to motivate, encourage, and mobilise local participation for managing local affairs, viz., resource management, tourism, and community development.

The ACAP approach to conservation is characterised by:

- a holistic and integrated approach,
- ensuring people's participation in all its programmes,
- sustainability in all its programmes,
- playing the role of a facilitator,
- a grass roots' approach, and
- flexibility in its programme implementation.

Although the major issues related to conservation and development appear similar throughout the Annapurna Region, the priority programme differs from area to area. Therefore, ACAP has formulated an area-specific programme, e.g., heritage conservation in the Upper Mustang, tourism in southern Annapurna, agroforestry in the Lwang area, integrated agriculture in the Sikles area, and poverty alleviation and genetic conservation in the Bhujung area. Resource conservation, which includes both natural and cultural resources; small-scale community development, such as schools, trails, drinking water, health care, and so on; and tourism management, which includes training local lodge owners; promoting alternative energy schemes, sensitising trekkers through promotion, publication, and visitor centres, and so on, have been conceived as core programmes. ACAP's emphasis is on the Conservation Education and Extension Programme (CEEP) because it provides a basis for sustainable programmes. These include awareness-generating programmes for various target groups, such as students, local population, resource managers, and trekkers; providing appropriate training in order to building local confidence; and building local capacities to manage the community's affairs.

Gender and Gender Needs

While making an analysis of this kind it is important to know about gender roles and needs. Biological differences between men and women do not change but the social roles they are required to play vary between different societies and cultures and at different periods of history. "Gender" is the term used to describe this social differentiation.

Because men and women have different gender roles, they also have different needs. **Practical gender needs** are those needs of women (or men) that are connected to their existing roles in society and to what people need to carry out their current jobs more easily or efficiently. **Strategic gender needs** are those needs that are essential to change men's and women's roles in society. The gender analyses carried out in Ghandruk and Dhampus were based on this conceptual background.

Activities addressing the practical needs of women include:

- reduction in their workloads,
- improvements in their health,

- obtaining better services for their families, and
- increasing household incomes.

Activities addressing strategic needs of women include:

- improvement in educational opportunities,
- improvement in access to productive assets, and
- increased and equal opportunities for gainful employment.

Gender Sensitivity in the ACAP Programme

The majority of permanent residents in Ghandruk and Dhampus villages are women. They are responsible for managing fodder supplies and are the main users of fuelwood, because cooking is exclusively a female task. Hence, it can be generalised that because women are solely responsible for cooking, they favour reducing fuelwood consumption because it would mean less effort expended in collecting fuelwood. Our findings using RRA and PRA methods showed that women are better informed concerning the exact amount of fuel and fodder required by a household and about the availability of these in the surrounding forests. Thus, they are logically the most sensitive group in the region to the need for conservation.

Gender sensitivity was assessed in the following three activities in ACAP.

- Environmental Activity - Forestry Programme
- Development Activity - Trail and Drinking Water Programme
- Economic Activity - Women's Development, DWET Programme;

It must be noted that all these activities are directly or indirectly related to tourism development.

Environmental Activity - Forestry Programme

ACAP has been promoting a specific WID programme in order to -

- encourage the involvement of women in different activities of ACAP;
- address women as a means of achieving efficiency in the conservation of natural resources;
- support women to be self reliant and establish them as equal partners in society's activities; and

- educate women so that they can help themselves and disseminate knowledge for the future generation (ACAP 1990).

In the forestry programme, which is one of the main programme components of ACAP, we find that the gender issue has not been well conceived. However, most of the forest-related programmes have given women an opportunity to participate, and this has been beneficial for them. Some relevant specific working policies of the Forestry Programme are:

- to create awareness among the local people concerning the importance of plantation;
- to facilitate local people's management and conservation of natural resources and ensure the adequate fulfilment of fuelwood, fodder, and timber needs;
- to facilitate the afforestation programme according to the needs and requirements of the local people;
- to make it mandatory to have one female member on the Conservation and Development Committee (CDC) and the sub-CDC;
- to facilitate self-reliance in timber, fodder, and fuelwood among the local people;
- to encourage local people to carry out private plantation;
- to facilitate the preparation of guidelines and the rules and regulations for the management of natural resources by local people and the committee; and
- to facilitate the regular monthly meetings of the CDC and sub-CDCs.

Gender Analysis in ACAP Forestry Programme

Strategic Needs: Although the activities under this programme that have been designed to achieve these objectives are not gender sensitive, they have ample scope for women's participation. For example, the afforestation programme has particularly appealed to women's groups and their involvement has been recorded as the highest in Ghandruk and Dhampus.

Women are able to make decisions regarding selection of sites, species, and time for plantation. This is carried out under the guidance of the technical staff of the ACAP. Prior to the ACAP, women had no role in the plantation process, as stated above. The situation is very different these days, women are the principal group for mobilising villagers to join this programme. In addition,

women also invest their groups' funds in the plantation programme. As a result, there are numerous "women's group" plantation sites in Ghandruk and Dhampus.

Since 1990, the women's group from the ACAP region have planted around seventy five-thousand tree saplings of various species. Their morale is further boosted by the frequent monitoring of their plantation site by Project staff, visits made by both national and international visitors, and radio and television coverage of their achievements in the national media.

The Forestry programme has not only **fostered women's decision-making capabilities**, but has also helped to **empower the local women** to some extent. Women have rights over the trees that they have planted. They are responsible for protection of their plantation sites and also have the full authority to use them in a sustainable manner in future. It is expected that in the next four years the increased availability of fuelwood and fodder will **ease women's workload** and reduce the time spent in collecting forest resources.

In the Annapurna region, the CDC (Conservation and Development Committee) is the primary decision-making body for the conservation of natural resources and development of the area. Every VDC (Village Development Committee) has a CDC. With the exception of the VDC chairman, all the members of the CDC and sub-CDC are nominated by the villagers.

A CDC has fifteen members (see Figure 4). The VDC chairman automatically becomes a member of the CDC. In addition, two memberships are reserved for a representative of the occupational caste and for a woman.

The CDC meets once a month to discuss problems and future plans for their assigned area.

Practical Needs: Considering women's time and work load, the project has established forest nurseries in strategic areas so that women do not have to travel long distances to collect saplings for plantation. This has facilitated and motivated women's participation in plantation. This programme has significantly assisted women in gaining confidence and becoming an influential group in their community.

Forestry extension programmes, such as mass meetings and mobile camps, are particularly targetted to women. Mass meetings are held in off-farming seasons. These seasons are **deliberately used** to involve more women during

their free time. In fact, the majority of the participants in these extension programmes are women. It has been observed that after the inclusion of the WID section as a complementary programme, the involvement of women in the Project's activities, especially in forestry, has been very high. During the follow-up visits women still remember the events of these programmes and even request that such activities be held more frequently.

Shortcomings of the Forestry Programme in Relation to Gender Issues

Although the participation of women in the committee is compulsory, this often tends to be mere tokenism. Even if the women make decisions in their own group meetings regarding natural resources, these have to be processed through the CDC. Very often the decision-makers, who in the majority of cases are men, resist or ignore women's participation in such matters.

Since the CDC is mainly responsible for the conservation and management of natural resources, their meetings are usually facilitated by the Rangers. Among the thirteen Rangers in the ACAP, only one is a woman. It has been experienced that village women feel more comfortable with the women staff than with men. This has also discouraged women's participation in the CDC meetings. In most cases, the majority of CDC members are influential village leaders, most of whom are retired ex-army men with ample free time. CDC meetings are held during the day. This situation discourages the participation of women in the meetings, as they are usually busy with household chores in the daytime. Thus, the time and structure of CDC meetings are not gender sensitive. Narmada *Gurung* of Dhampus explained the process in which she was selected as a CDC member:

"None of the women were independently elected for the CDC. Later, during selection of the mandatory member, all the influential men who had been elected as CDC members also, gave my name. They didn't even ask for my opinion. When the ACAP staff intervened saying that all the villagers would have to agree to the selection, everyone agreed. I am glad to be a member of this committee but would have felt more comfortable if two more women had been selected. Since I am the only woman on the CDC, I feel awkward in front of all the men and usually do not attend the meetings. The few times that I have attended the meetings, my whole day has been wasted. The meetings are held during the day, starting at eleven in the morning, but by the time the chairman and other members arrive

it is one or two in the afternoon. So the schedules are very inconvenient for me."

Regulations regarding forestry and major decisions such as allotment of timber for house construction and repair; allotment of area and season for fuelwood collection, and so on are to determined by the CDC. The marginalisation of women, despite their heavy contribution and motivation for forestry is quite visible in that, in terms of information, they are bypassed.

One of the main reasons for women's non-involvement in forestry discussions is the absence, in most cases, of women on the VDCs and the CDCs. Major decisions are announced through a local village crier, known as the *katuwal*, who hails from the untouchable caste, i.e., *Damai*. From strategic places in the village the *katuwal* publicly announces the directions that result from policy decisions of the CDC. For example, these include designation of the area and time for annual fuelwood collection. Kali *Damini* aptly described women's non-involvement in forestry discussions.

"Every month the Ba party' (men's group) has a meeting, I have never attended it. This meeting is very important, as they decide about the time and area for fuelwood collection. Sometimes the members ask everyone to attend the meeting, my husband attends. I feel awkward attending this meeting as there are only men. I go for the women's group meeting only, and this is held occasionally at night."

A serious gender-sensitive programme would require the involvement of more women activists, motivators, and a longer time duration, as women have their own limitations, e.g., lack of education, awareness, social restrictions, and so on. Women also need frequent follow-up and guidance.

Lessons Learned

- Women's participation in the meetings and in influencing the decisions cannot be ensured without their increased membership.
- More women staff are needed in the ACAP as well as in the relevant line agency programme for easier interaction with local women.
- The time and structure of the meetings must be convenient for women.



Plate 1: Rain and leeches do not prevent the Dhampus Mothers' Group from planting trees - their priority concern



Plate 2: Mothers' Group resting after weeding their plantation site at Ghandruk



Plate 3: Eggs for Ghandruk: do they need to come from Pokhara as above?



Plate 4: Mothers' Group in action: repairing trails in Ghandruk

Tourism has been a major contributor to the mountain economy. Case Studies in Ghandruk and Dhampus show that, with the advent of tourism in the Annapurna area, the economic standards of the local people have improved. However, tourism is a new economic opportunity in the Annapurna region. This is even so for local women who were previously virtually locked away from the 'outside' world. The foreign language, culture, food habits, and so on were barriers that hindered the participation of women in tourism.

To address women more specifically and directly, a separate Women's Development Programme (WID) was introduced into ACAP's programmes in 1990. Female staff were hired and trained in order to carry out activities focussed on women. Considerable attention was given during programme formulation to address the specific needs of women.

The WID programme aims to provide the women of the area with greater opportunities to become economically more independent by teaching them new skills, by improving their existing skills, and by helping them to generate income on their own. ACAP, in its efforts to bring about the economic upliftment of local women, has launched skill development programmes.

As experienced by other national WID programmes and by ACAP itself, the goal of making women more economically independent cannot be attained if the programme is not carefully planned to incorporate all aspects of entrepreneurship development for women who are completely new to the tourism business. Skill development training alone is not enough. Many aspects, including leadership, confidence building, skills in negotiating market prices, information on credit, and so on have to be incorporated into entrepreneurship development.

Background

Under the WID programme, ACAP is carrying out the DWET (Developing Women's Entrepreneurship in Tourism) project launched by HMG (His Majesty's Government), with the financial assistance of the UNDP/ILO. This project is specifically geared towards developing the entrepreneurial skills of women. DWET aims to assist women in using the opportunities available in the field of tourism. The DWET programme is the first of its kind in Nepal in which women are specifically and deliberately targeted. The thrust is on training in order to enable women to develop entrepreneurial skills. Some of the specific outputs to be achieved from the DWET training course are:

- 20 new businesses initiated or existing female-owned ventures assisted in improving their profitability;
- at least 60 women trained in these courses during the contract duration;
- trained entrepreneurs provided with ongoing Technical Business Assistance for their new or existing enterprises; and
- trained entrepreneurs linked to credit via banks or via revolving loan funds (if necessary).



Plate 5: Jubilant participants in the DWET Training Programme at Dhampus



Plate 6: Local DWET Trainer using pictorial illustrations during training



Plate 7: Camping site substituting farmland due to higher payoff expectations



Plate 8: Carpet weaving and selling: now Om Kumari's full time occupation

The specific training objectives clearly indicate that, at the end of the training period, female participants will have developed the capacity to start a small enterprise. Participants are expected to be able to:

- present a business plan to a credit source for the purpose of a loan application,
- start a small business or income-generating venture, and
- manage a small business or income generating venture.

Gender Analysis

Practical Needs: In designing the programmes especially for women, various aspects have to be considered, e.g., target group/area, training design, women's needs, trainers, etc. It is very important for programmes to be sensitive to the culture, language, geography, and traditions in order for them to become effective and sustainable. The DWET programme therefore requires that training managers **should be from the target area**. This aspect of the training helps to:

- develop local manpower, so that they will still be able to continue the programme in an inexpensive manner even after phasing out of the programme;
- create job opportunities for the educated-unemployed of the area; and
- understand the field situation better since the trainers will be local women, thus making the programme effective at the implementation level.

The DWET training course is designed to encourage women to **explore and study** the prospects of job opportunities in tourism. This has stimulated women to identify other possibilities in tourism apart from the traditional accommodation business. Women have been able to use the available resources with small amounts of capital investment. **Sunita Gurung**, a girl from a poor family in Dhampus, has converted her backyard into a camping site to rent out to trekking tourist groups. She keeps her backyard clean and beautiful with flowers. She has received a small loan from the project. With that money she has kept a few essential items for the tourists' use such as soft drinks, chocolates, cigarettes, and so on. She also has a small kitchen garden. She has already paid back the first instalment of her loan.

In the Annapurna area, tourism development has been a significant contributor to the local economy. However, the retention of tourism income in the local

economy is minimal. Almost all food supplies are brought in. Even vegetable supplies, which can be obtained from the area itself, are brought from Pokhara. No study has yet been carried out on this aspect to measure economic leakages and real benefits from tourism income. Hence, it is vital to identify these leakages and take steps to prevent them.

The DWET programme training has opened avenues for women in areas such as poultry raising, vegetable growing, rabbit farming, and so on. Cultural norms have yet to change. For example, in traditional *Gurung* communities, vegetables are not considered as saleable products. Therefore, vegetable production is not an attractive proposition to local residents who are still reluctant to work on farms. As their status goes up, they employ others to work on the farms. Job opportunities are therefore created for wage labourers and occupational castes.

In the first year of the DWET project implementation, very few women selected agro-based enterprises as their field of interest. In the second year, the increase was minimal but encouraging. It is hoped that these indirect tourism-related businesses will help to reduce economic leakages from the region.

Women do not have control over the family's income, and this has been a major constraint in starting enterprises of their choice. Unlike the SFDP (Small Farmers' Development Project), the **credit facilities** provided by the DWET project are not limited to agro-based enterprises only, they are open to all types of enterprises. The loan recipients do not have to present collateral, neither do they have to form groups, as in the case of the SFDP. Hence, this component of the programme has been successful in addressing the needs of poor women.

The participatory approach has been used in DWET Trainee **selection**. This approach has helped the project personnel to avoid the intervention of village leaders and has ensured the selection of genuine trainees.

The needs and requirements of women are different from those of men, as they usually lack education, exposure, and experience. Hence, during programme formulation, they require regular supervision and follow-up. The recruitment of four full-time, field-based **Training Managers** is another important component for the effectiveness of the programme. Most of the DWET trainees are from poor families. For them, the tourism business is a new opportunity. They require at least three to four years to fully establish their enterprises properly. The Training Managers regularly monitor and supervise their work in the field and assist them in dealing with problems as they arise.

In the mountains of Nepal, where most of the adult population are illiterate and basic facilities are lacking, it is important to be **flexible and adaptable** in programme implementation. In the case of DWET, both the donor and the implementing agency have modified and adjusted the programme according to the field situation. For example, during the selection of training managers the basic educational requirement was a Bachelor's degree. In the Annapurna region there are very few women who have that qualification, and those who have already migrated to the cities. Thus, the basic educational requirement was changed from Bachelor's to SLC (School Leaving Certificate). The training package, too, was modified to be within the capacity of the Training Managers.

Strategic needs: Credit facilities, together with the DWET training project programme and follow-up supervision, have enabled women to own and manage their enterprises. This has contributed to the enhancement of the decision-making capabilities of women and has empowered them in both an economic and a social sense. As a result, in Dhampus and Ghandruk alone, there are about twenty enterprises solely owned and managed by women.

Major Achievements of the DWET Project

The achievements of the DWET project are presented in Table 8. These are the results of the training carried out in Ghandruk, Ghodepani, and Dhampus.

Table 8: Achievements of the DWET Project December 1991-June 1994

1.	Total number of women trained by the project.	211
2.	Total number of tourism-related enterprises established by project-trained women.	27
3.	Total number of women owned/operated (already existed) tourism businesses assisted by the project.	99
4.	Total number of entrepreneurs provided with loans from the project.	18
5.	Total amount of loans disbursed	NR 169,000



Plate 9: Priya's daring move to a market innovation: a repository of Gurung tradition



Plate 10: Interior of a traditional Gurung display room



Plate 11: Burden-released Haisuba standing in front of her eco-lodge in Ghandruk



Plate 12: Trade diversification to minimise risk: consumer-cum-carpet shop at Ghandruk

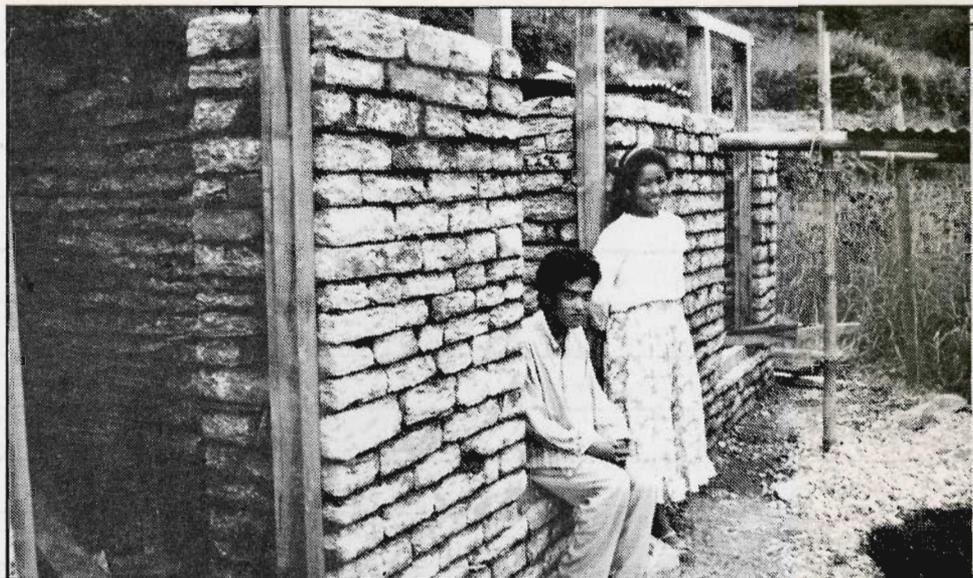


Plate 13: Emerging new ideas: consequence of DWET training , a laundry-cum-shower room under construction in Ghandruk



Plate 14: Holding new income-generating hopes in her arms: an angora rabbit

The types of enterprise established by project trained women are as follows.

• Tea shop:	5
• <i>Gurung</i> Ethnographic Display Room:	1
• Lodge:	2
• Rabbit farming:	1
• Poultry:	11
• Goat raising:	1
• Carpet weaving:	5
• Camping site:	1
• Laundry and shower rooms	1
• Consumer shops	3

Shortcomings of the DWET Project

Although, the DWET training programme has been successful in making tourism enterprises more accessible to women of the Annapurna region, it has some critical shortcomings too.

Certain linkages, which are very crucial to the programme's success, have been overlooked. Since most of the adult women are illiterate, or have only basic reading and writing skills, the basic education requirement for the training course was a major constraint for them. In the field situation, it was difficult to find such a target group. Illiterate local women were very interested in participating in the training programme, and the training managers slightly modified the training package and included these women in the course. With limited time and lack of immediate technical support, some problems arose during the course.

Women from poor families, especially from occupational castes, also contribute to their family incomes. For them the length of the training period (twenty-one days) was very long. The educational prerequisite and the length of the training period mostly favoured women from relatively well-off households.

The training course, though very aptly designed for developing women's entrepreneurial skills, had no provision for the women to use fully the training received. Most women-owned or run enterprises are in the accommodation

sector. Women are still hesitant to start enterprises in new areas, as they have no experience and skills. The lack of linkages with other components of tourism development perhaps encourage women to start enterprises in the catering sectors. Mrs Chandrakali Adhikari (*Brahmin*), one of the DWET trainees, who chose poultry raising as her business expressed her dilemma as follows.

"In the training course I chose poultry raising and even applied for the loan. I never thought that the loan would be sanctioned so soon and had not prepared anything. The thought of paying back the loan and the interest worried me. So as soon as I received the loan, I ordered the improved breed of chickens. I received a one-day briefing from the project staff. They had told me to wait for another month when ACAP was also organising poultry training, I could not wait. I didn't realise that the improved breed requires extra care and out of the 150 chickens 70 died."

The DWET project has been extended for a year. The shortcomings have been realised, and the package has been thoroughly revised using the feedback received from the field.

Lessons Learned

The following lessons emerge from the DWET case study.

- Entrepreneurship development programmes cannot be dealt with in isolation. They have to be linked to other aspects such as skill development, business exposure, regular guidance, and so on.
- It is essential for the training course to be area-specific and designed according to the needs of the people. The programme either has to be designed so that both well-off and poor women can participate or separate programmes focussing on the needs of different groups of women are necessary.
- Two to three years are not sufficient for entrepreneurship development programmes. The project duration should at least be for four to five years, backed up with regular and quality monitoring and supervision.

Community Development Activity

With the combined effect of external interventions, such as those provided by ACAP and tourism development, women in the Annapurna Region have become aware of their potential to organise themselves as a group. This has also come about through the formation of *Ama Toli* (traditional women's groups). In the past local women's groups were passive and had less involvement in community development activities. Today, they have accepted the assistance of ACAP, hoping to become better organised and more efficient in their programme implementation. In community development activities several avenues have opened for women's participation. Some of the main working policies of the ACAP infrastructural development programme are as follows.

- The request for the project has to be made and supported by the community.
- The community is responsible for planning and designing (non-technical aspects) the project.
- The community has to provide unskilled labour and transportation of materials from the nearest roadhead to the site. Preferably the community will contribute 50 per cent of the total project costs.
- The requested project should have the consent and approval of the CDC.

These policies clearly indicate that the projects have to be identified by the local people and their full participation is essential at all levels of programme execution. This element of the policy has appealed to women as they themselves are aware of and seeking for opportunities to be involved in community development activities. The funds raised by women's groups from the cultural programme have also played an important role in their decision-making at community level.

The main areas of ACAP's involvement in community development activities are construction and maintenance of small-scale projects, such as drinking water systems, school buildings, bridges, irrigation systems, drainage systems, and so on. With the inception of the Women's Development Section in 1990 in ACAP, women's participation in the community development activity has increased significantly. The enthusiasm and motivation of local women have made it easier to implement programmes identified at the field level. One of the technical staff members expressed his opinion as follows.

"It is very easy to work with women. They never make things complicated. Volunteer labour is no problem for them, and the projects are always completed on time."

Gender Analysis

In the past, initiation and decision-making in infrastructural development activities were strictly a "men's area" of work. Today, with the availability of funds and the ability to mobilise the community, a favourable situation for women to prove their potential has been created.

Women have realised the importance of their involvement in community development activities, especially infrastructural development, as it is a major means of gaining credit and respect in society. The chairperson of Ghandruk's women group (ward # 3), expressed her opinion.

"After we registered our ward's group in the ACAP office, our first project was to construct a trail in our ward. Everyone commented that trail building is not a women's development activity. This view was also supported by ACAP personnel. But we were adamant and continued with our project. After we completed our project the appreciation and respect we received was just overwhelming. Soon this trend spread like wildfire to other villages too. If we had carried out a directly women-related activity in the beginning, I am sure that our efforts would not have been appreciated as much. Men have realised our potential and even invite us to some of their meetings. Today, we have been able to ban drinking and gambling in the village."

Shortcomings of the Community Development Project in Relation to Gender Issues

Although women contribute significantly, both in terms of labour and cash, to community development activities, they are still overlooked in major community development projects. Women still meet with resistance from men. One of the policy's states that projects have to be recommended by the CDC. It was observed that the CDC was usually reluctant to recommend projects identified by women unless they agreed to provide funds. As Nanda K. Gurung of Ghandruk put it.

"We can do little until we have collected money. So, the main goal of the women's group is to raise as much as we can."

In the larger projects, such as bridges, drinking water systems, construction, and so on, despite women's contributions of volunteer labour and, in some cases of cash, they are usually ignored when it comes to planning and designing the project. Although ACAP has improved its approaches to ensure maximum women's participation at all levels of the project, it is still very difficult in the field situation, mainly due to traditional perceptions of the role of women. For example, in the construction of drinking water systems, local people's involvement is required, right from identifying the source, sketching the village map, repeated discussions and dialogue, to maintenance. Women are either unable to give time, or are not facilitated to do so.

In spite of these problems, the involvement of women has increased considerably in the past few years. Thus, in order to ensure full participation, an aggressive input from the Project is essential. This means a special motivation programme for women and improvement in the information channels prior to the implementation of the projects.

In summary, the participation of women in community development activities, especially at the decision-making level, has markedly improved in the past five years. Slowly but steadily their involvement in large-scale projects is increasing too. ACAP has modified its working policies and approaches in the implementation of its projects to ensure women's participation at all levels.

Lessons Learned

The main lesson is to rectify the shortcomings noted above. More time should be allocated to the implementation of community development programmes in order to ensure women's participation at all levels, particularly in the case of major projects such bridge building, micro-hydro, irrigation, and so on.

ACAP's Monitoring and Evaluation Criteria

Monitoring is an ongoing process. ACAP has devised a very strong monitoring system. The project is divided into five regional offices in Ghandruk, Sikles, Bhujung, Manang, and Jomsom, and two sub-regional offices in Lwang and Lo-Manthang. All regional and sub-regional offices are under the command of a Senior Conservation Officer (SCO) who reports directly to the Project Director based in Pokhara. The SPO is supported by 25-30 staff of all levels who

regularly meet once a week to report on their progress. The SCO and the concerned section staff regularly oversee field activities. SPO also holds regular meetings with various committees (CDC, LMC, and so on) and groups (women's, youth, students', and so on) who generally meet once a month. Local committees and groups send the minutes of their meetings to the respective offices, and these are thoroughly examined to assess the compatibility of local decisions with ACAP objectives.

The Committee and group members are regularly briefed on ACAP objectives. The ACAP has developed a range of criteria to monitor each programme component. The indicators for assessing the success and failure of programmes are based on using qualitative (perceptions, remarks, comments, discussions, interviews, observations) and quantitative (#, ratio, survey, etc) expressions.

There is also a periodic evaluation of ACAP's programmes. This is categorised into external and internal evaluations. For internal evaluation, senior level staff (technical and programme sections) are involved. The internal evaluation takes place quarterly and the final annually. This covers programme performance, use of funds, staff performance, accounting, assessment of Committees' funding and status, and so on.

The external evaluation takes place as per the demand and decision of donors. This is usually divided into two stages, mid-term and final evaluation, which covers a 5-year period.

The same methodologies are used in assessing WID and DWET. The only difference is that these programmes are exclusively monitored and evaluated by the concerned officers and support staff.

Gender Gaps in Tourism in Nepal

Gender Gaps at Policy Levels

While the Constitution of Nepal, the Eighth Five-year Plan, and the signature of Nepal without reservation to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 1991) have contained rhetorical statements about equality for women, the gender mainstreaming performance in practice remains only marginally achieved. As put by Banskota and Sharma, this is primarily due to policy and institutional failures which are further compounded by market failures because private parties, in their pursuit of income and employment, have neglected gender concerns in mountain tourism and the conservation dimension in terms of the mountain environment.

The gender perspective in the government tourism policy is only a recent concern. In early five year plans, tourism was merely considered as a source of foreign exchange earnings and employment. A Tourism Master Plan was formulated during the Fourth Plan period in 1972 and encompassed a comprehensive set of policies to promote tourism. This formed the basis for tourism promotion activities in the subsequent plans. The Fifth Plan (1975-80) visualised a policy of increasing employment through tourism and promotion of new tourist destinations to disperse possible benefits from tourism. The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) took an integrated approach and spelled out the specific objectives as:

- earning foreign exchange,
- increasing the number of tourists and lengthening their stay,
- replacing imported goods by domestic goods for the tourism sector, and
- providing employment opportunities through tourism-related industries.

Tourism development objectives in the Seventh Five-year Plan (1985/90) were geared at both quantitative and qualitative aspects. The principal objectives were:

- to improve the balance of payment situation through increased foreign exchange earning by attracting high budget travellers,
- to generate new opportunities for employment by stimulating tourist-oriented industries and services,

- to increase the length of tourist stay and ensure wider distribution of tourist visits by promoting tourism industries in different areas, and
- to promote import substitution in the tourism sector.

Nowhere in these plans has any mention been made of gender issues in tourism.

The Eighth Plan, which is generally considered to be more sensitive to gender issues, also fails to spell out a concern for this aspect as is evident from the following tourism development strategy:

- encouragement of foreign and domestic investment to increase the capacity of tourism services,
- increased investment in physical infrastructure,
- opening up of new areas of tourist attraction,
- attracting more high budget tourists and lengthening the average duration of their stay, and
- encouraging cultural/religious tourism.

Instead, the Eighth Plan has propagated a separated WID policy stating that the economic development of the country will not be possible unless women participate fully in the nation building task. The Eighth Plan strategies for WID include:

- women's participation in traditional and non-traditional sectors,
- extending access of women to formal and non-formal education,
- increasing women's access to health facilities,
- adopting affirmative action in hiring and training women,
- increasing women's access to credit, technical knowledge, entrepreneurship development programmes, marketing, and employment opportunities,
- extending to rural areas technological changes that reduce time spent by women in gathering and fetching firewood, and fodder, and
- revising laws that are discriminatory towards women.

It is of particular concern that the WID objectives and tourism development policies and strategies are stated separately in the plan document without establishing linkages between the two. In fact, the gender concerns should be treated as an integral part of the sectoral programmes, including tourism.

The legislative gaps with regard to women are equally prominent. The most serious one is the absence of a right to property. Since the major tourism-related enterprises are of a capital-intensive nature, such as the construction of hotels and lodges, lack of property rights for women precludes them from access to the required capital to undertake such enterprises on their own. The Tourism Act, 2035, and the subsequent regulations are also surprisingly silent on gender issues.

Gender Gaps at Programme Formulation Levels

The main basis for programme formulation is information and its dissemination. There are wide gaps in information dissemination regarding the role of women and their contributions to tourism. These gaps arise both from conceptual shortcomings regarding women's work and from the manner in which data are generated for national accounting systems. For example, the concentration of women is highest in the informal sector which contributes significantly to tourism, both directly and indirectly. Women's work in the formal sector only is accounted for in national statistics. Informal work, which characterises women's involvement in tourism, thus remains ignored.

At the central level, within the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS 1993), desegregated data by sex on tourism-related activities have not been maintained. In the NRB Survey (1990), a breakdown of the economically active population (10 years and above) by major occupation and sex revealed that women's participation in every occupation is less than 50 per cent than that of men. This implies that women's involvement remains ignored by national/household statistics.

All development projects, technical or otherwise, affect women and men. However, women's concerns are more frequently unidentified because they are consciously or subconsciously excluded. Despite the shift towards development approaches that emphasise women's roles, women are often the missing variable in project implementation. For this reason, it is more important to look more closely at the resulting position of women - especially in terms of understanding the competing interests or constraints influencing tourism-related activities through different phases of a project cycle.

Gender Gaps at Implementation and Decision-making Levels

The Tourism Infrastructure Development Project (TIDP), which was launched in the FY 1992/93, is being implemented by the government to improve

infrastructure in order to enhance the flow of tourists in Nepal. One of its basic objectives is to "*enhance the involvement of the private sector in tourism-related intervention and create employment opportunities.*" The other benefit of the project is involvement of low-income groups in tourism-related activities. This appears to be a non-viable area in which women, as a category of the population with low incomes and less opportunities, may find a place.

Women do not form a homogeneous category. Women in the mountains are more actively engaged in decision-making within both the household and the community. However, it does not hold true for all mountain communities. The *Brahmin* and *Chhetri* families for example tend to be more disinclined to allow their womenfolk to actively participate in decision-making at any level. Further, irrespective of their ethnicity, economic status, or religion, sex stereotyping does affect men's and women's range of options in the labour market. This definitely has implications for their participation in tourism and other sectorally-linked components, e.g., agriculture, livestock, forestry, and energy, in the context of the mountain region.

Participatory Limitations

Some of the main limitations affecting the participation of women in tourism in Nepal arise from conceptual and practical shortcomings. Planning for women in development takes place at levels of government from which women are absent, or ineffective, and where male policy-makers and planners hardly give due consideration to women. At implementation level, women are held back by cultural and socioeconomic constraints.

The limitations affecting women's participation in the tourism sector can thus be briefly summarised as follows.

- The women in Nepal are looked upon as a homogeneous category, and this fails to take account of their sociocultural, economic, and environmental responses to change.
- Women's reproductive role has always been assumed to be important, thereby minimising the consideration of exogenous trends and dynamic forces that influence their participation in the tourism industry.
- There is insufficient stress on "women", while tourism programme documents mostly refer to the "people".
- As mentioned briefly in the Eighth Plan, there are inadequate references to specific details to indicate how these programmes will impact women when women are targeted.

There is now greater knowledge and wider understanding of the importance of gender development policy and practice. However, in Nepal, stark disparities persist between men's and women's status, access to resources, control of assets, and decision-making powers which undermine sustainable and equitable development. Tourism policies and programmes have tended to concentrate on foreign exchange earnings and the technicalities of international tourism, e.g., accommodation and hotels, guesthouse facilities, restaurants, curio shops, and travel and trekking agencies. All of these are capital-intensive projects that are undertaken either as joint ventures with foreign investors or as initiatives by industrialists in the private sector. What does tourism mean to women? This question demands a more comprehensive look at tourism from a gender perspective, and, for the most part, this is lacking at present.

Research Gaps

There is so little understanding about gender issues in tourism that the field remains wide open. The main research gaps in gender-related issues evolve from gaps in data that hide the real and prioritised issues requiring research.

Policy and programme statements at the macro-level place emphasis on the contribution of tourism to the economy as a foreign exchange earner and on its capabilities for creating employment. Within the framework of such a strategy, the interests of mountain people, especially those of women, have been subsumed in the broader interests of achieving overall benefits and their distribution among all sections of the population. The effects of the tourism industry on mountain communities, particularly on women whose daily lives are most affected by it, remain largely unexplored.

Though mountain tourism generates employment, the nature of such employment is seasonal. Furthermore, the locale-specific nature of employment serves mostly people living along the trekking routes. These regional imbalances in employment opportunities for local people in the mountains, where resources are scarce and unemployment high, impact women more than men. This dimension of quantitative research is also quite open.

In sum, therefore, serious gaps with regard to the equitable participation of women have been noticed at planning, programming, and implementation levels. The most noticeable gap is seen in gender orientation and sensitisation, which is a manifestation of the lack of gender-desegregated statistics at national level, an essential prerequisite for formulating policies and programmes fostering gender equality.

Recommendations and Suggestions

The opportunities opened to the people of Nepal through mountain tourism are many. However, due to lack of gender sensitivity in the tourism development strategies of the government, as well as the socioeconomic inhibitions of women which are perpetrated by society, very few mountain women have been able to harness the full benefits from these opportunities. Instead, many women have to bear such costs as spending more time to search for fodder and fuelwood because of benefits that accrue to others. Prostitution is another aspect of the side effects which, although not originating with tourism, are exacerbated by it. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to devise gender-sensitive tourism development policies and strategies to benefit the many hitherto oppressed rural women in mountain areas.

The discussions in the foregoing chapters clearly indicate the need to urgently take action in regard to the following.

- **Clear-cut policies, strategies, and legislations that are sensitive to gender issues must evolve in all sectors of the economy, including tourism.**

As noted earlier, no linkage is shown between the Tourism Policy and Women in Development in the Eighth Plan. Policy statements for tourism development must be based on a clear, conceptual framework regarding gender relations in different economic and social situations. For example, the tourism development policy states that employment generation and human resources' development in tourism are important areas. However, it does not specify women as beneficiaries of these programmes, nor does it state the potential areas for women's employment. Policy concerns should also single out opportunities for which women have a comparative economic niche. Legislative measures, such as providing equal rights to women (including property and its inheritance), must also be clearly explained.

- **Gender orientation must be provided at all levels of the State machinery.**

Although there is increasing evidence of interest in gender concerns in tourism in HMG departments, major discrepancies remain due to the lack of understanding in conceptualising the gender issue in the planning

stages. In this respect the following specific measures are recommended.

- Regular briefings on gender concepts to officials in government departments concerned with tourism development. This would mean introducing gender analysis training for HMG officials on a tier by tier basis as a regular part of the civil service training exercise.
Inclusion of at least one WID expert as a member of the team for planning and programming of activities. This will help incorporate gender concerns into the programme. Similarly, the monitoring and follow-up activities, as well as evaluation and impact assessments, should also include WID experts.
- Gender orientation for parliamentarians, especially women parliamentarians, to ensure influence in policy matters.
- Dissemination of women's success stories in tourism to motivate other women to participate in the tourism industry.
- Assessment of national policies concerning women and tourism development to see whether they are favourable to women directly, or to men and women equally, or whether they do not benefit women, or whether they work against women. Such policy critiques should identify specific gaps within policy contents and actions. Accordingly, situation analysis studies should be undertaken.
- Tourism should be included in the syllabus of the university since it is one of Nepal's principal growth industries. It has only recently been introduced, at Master's level, but gender as an analytical tool in tourism has not been sufficiently incorporated into the curriculum.
- The government and public sector enterprises concerned with tourism employers and employees in the private sector should be sensitised about gender, so that they can remove cultural barriers that inhibit women from getting jobs and developing careers in tourism.

□ **Micro-level, gender-desegregated statistics must be collected and maintained to identify the discrepancies in opportunities for women in all sectors, including tourism.**

Gaps in gender-desegregated data have made it impossible to assess the role of women in national development and in identifying the areas in

which women have not been able to exploit available opportunities. Without identifying these gaps, no further research to explore the reasons for such discrepancies can evolve. Consequently, the planners and policy-makers will, as in the past, be faced with a limited domain of information with which to make a headway on gender-sensitive policies and programmes. The following statistics and information on women in the tourism sector must be generated and maintained:

- the proportion of indirect work related to tourism performed by women of various ethnic groups,
- the number of women role models in the tourism sector,
- the contribution to tourism earnings by women, and
- the multiplier effects of tourist expenditure accruing to women in different tourism-related activities.

- **The tasks performed in oblivion by women must be brought to the forefront of the national accounting system to fully appreciate their role in the national economy. The current greater but unaccounted for work burden of women must be fully explored.**

The indirect services provided in oblivion by women for the growth of tourism in Nepal appear to be substantial but their magnitude has not been estimated. Due to this, women's contribution to national development seems to be largely undermined. Women's contributions to the tourism sector, both direct and indirect, should be determined and part of the revenue realised by the government on account of women should be ploughed back into schemes contributing to the general well-being of these women.

- **Alternative sources of energy, such as biogas, solar energy, and electricity, must be seriously promoted to protect the forest resources from depletion so that mountain women do not have to travel successively further to collect fuelwood and fodder.**

Forest degradation due to increased use of firewood by tourists has increased the firewood and fodder collection time, mostly expended by mountain women. Alternative sources of energy and energy conservation measures, such as biogas, solar panels, electricity from micro-hydro schemes, and fuel-saving technologies, need to be sought and promoted in order to maintain the environmental balance of fragile mountain areas.

- **Access to institutional credit for women for establishing competitive tourism-related business enterprises, which are mostly of a capital-intensive nature, needs to be ensured.**

Most of the financing institutions require collateral for loans, while others, such as SFDP, require group credit mechanisms. The transaction time for each loan is also often prohibitive. Without collateral-free loans, or the control of property in order to offer collateral, women will find it difficult to borrow institutional loans. These constraints should be remedied.

Further, it is observed that, in the case of DWET, even with the provision of collateral-free loans, women have not been able to absorb enough credit, mainly due to the long distances to credit sources; difficult terrain; lack of time, due to household chores, to devote to credit transactions; objections by male members of the family; and other risk factors. Arrangements for mobile banks directly approaching potential women borrowers could make a difference. Adequate support services (training, inputs, market, etc) should also be arranged along with the loans.

- **Supporting awareness and skill training programmes for women must be greatly enhanced through national programmes rather than being scattered project interventions on a small scale. Moreover, the integrated package approach must be used in order to reap the benefits the skill training imparted.**

The lack of education, lack of exposure, and ignorance impede women, particularly in the rural areas and in the underprivileged ethnic groups, from benefitting from tourism-led opportunities. Following specific reformative measures are suggested.

1. Community-supported child care centres must be opened to permit girls to attend schools, along with conscientisation programmes about female education.
2. Informal functional education targetting women for general awareness and a specific functional package based on the locale-specific needs.
3. Special skill training programmes for women.

In women's awareness and training programmes, the following items must be taken into consideration.

1. Women must be directly approached in their homesteads for registration for training. Such home visits will also dissipate some of the objections from the family, particularly those of the male members. Preference in trainee selection should be given to poor and underprivileged groups of women.
2. Training materials should be developed based on the pre-examined capacities of the participating women.
3. The timing of training must not compete with the timings of the women's household obligations. Long duration training courses must be avoided.
4. Male relatives must be involved in and oriented to at least a part of the training cycle so that their trust is maintained.
5. Expert female trainers must be used who can ease some of the inhibitions of women.
6. Local practical examples, role models, and neutral training materials must be used.
7. The training should be based on identified needs and in integrated package form for its sustainable use. The package form refers to the existence of potentials and arrangement of other support services to ensure practical application of the training. The package (encompassing related disciplines) should be devised by a group of experts having sufficient experience of the local problems and situations ascertained by relevant technical feasibilities, economic viabilities, market surveys, etc.

□ **Policy-related research issues on gender/WID concerns must be identified and studied in depth to provide feedback to policy-makers**

During programme planning, sufficient funds should be allocated to undertake studies on issues that reflect gender concerns in tourism. For example, gender implications of tourism development and the impact on seasonal employment opportunities for women in tourism, women's

perceptions of tourism and its impact on the household, coping strategies of women and their participation in tourism in the mountains, and so on.

□ **Spatial diversification of mountain tourism for equity**

The benefits from mountain tourism are reaped by the mountain people, including women, in limited geographical areas the (main tourist hubs of Kathmandu and Pokhara) and within these also by a limited section of the population. The Tourism Policy mentioned the diversification of tourism to all potential places in a phase-wise manner but no such time frame seems to be in the offing. There should, therefore, be a definite tourism diversification plan with sufficient resources allocated for the creation of a basic tourism infrastructure by the government as well as by motivating the private sector.

□ **Regular monitoring and supervision of programmes and their impact on the target population and environment are important!**

Regular supervision and monitoring of programme activities to examine whether implementation is on the expected track are very important. Monitoring should be carried out on the basis of a carefully designed check-list and monitoring indicators which may vary by the nature and objectives of the programme. Impact on women and the environment, however, should be a necessary component of such indicators. The conceptual and practical field level problems identified during monitoring should be passed on to appropriate decision-making levels for solutions. The timing and team composition for monitoring is also important.

Lastly, even the best recommendations by themselves cannot change anything until there is a serious commitment at political and bureaucratic levels to genuinely implement these recommendations. When the required commitment is there, then the policies must be translated into concrete programmes with definite practical steps and a feasible timetable for action.

Appendix 1

GIST OF THE WOMEN IN TOURISM (UNDP/ILO/NEP/88/050) CAMPAIGN KIT.
The design, development, and delivery of the campaign kit is geared towards:

- increasing awareness, appreciation, and knowledge of tourism among the female population of Nepal, in general, and the project-selected (13) potential areas in particular;
- reinforcing the understanding of the costs and benefits of tourism for the female population of the country;
- highlighting the job opportunities available for women in the tourism sector of the country; and
- becoming the source of information for MOTCA for setting up policies for women's entrepreneurship development in tourism.

The kit consists of a:

- banner stating "Women in Tourism Development and Women for Tourism Development";
- handouts/prepared on:
 - tourism and its structure,
 - tourism, its costs, and benefits-global, regional, and national outlook,
 - career prospects in tourism for women in Nepal in general and selected areas in particular, and
 - assistance available for women's entrepreneurship in the tourism sector;
- publications and broadcasting:
 - various articles from newspapers in the Nepali language,
 - radio broadcasts in the form of radio talk programmes,
 - dramas and interviews of successful women employees from the tourism industry;
- audiovisuals:
 - films on Tourism in Nepal (e.g., "Nepal where the Legends Live") 1988 PATA;

- presentation:

- slide shows on Nepali women employee profiles in tourism (30 minutes),
- booklets with women employees in the tourism sector,
- three posters encouraging women to get into tourism sector employment; and

- target group:

Group 1: present and prospective women's entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, girl students and community leaders from selected potential tourism areas, and
Group 2: Female population at large at the national level including Group 1.

Appendix 2

Assistance Available for Women Entrepreneurs in Tourism

For over a decade, His Majesty's Government of Nepal has provided assistance to develop entrepreneurship in the tourism sector. At present, assistance to entrepreneurs is provided by institutions, associations, agencies, corporations, companies, or individuals. These institutions deal with functions, such as management, finance, technology, and general development. A brief summary of the assistance available is given below.

1. Management Assistance

Entrepreneurship development requires managerial assistance in areas such as management (including operational management) and entrepreneurial skills' training. The German Technical Assistance organisation funded the **Small Business Promotion Project** and the **Department of Cottage and Small-Scale Industry** provides general training on the occupational, and managerial aspects of entrepreneurship development. The training related to entrepreneurial management and skills for establishing enterprises are provided through various training programmes conducted by the **Hotel Management and Tourism Training Centre (HMTTC)**.

2. Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is an integral component for the development of entrepreneurship of any type. Assured financial assistance has added importance to developing tourism-based enterprises which are by and large capital intensive in nature. The financial assistance to this sector is provided by the institutions given in the box.

There are no financial institutions that are specialised in lending for activities related to the tourism sector. The financial institutions mentioned above provide assistance to a very limited extent. Tourism, by these institutions, is included under the "service sector" head.

Representation of Financial Assistance Available

Institution Type	Scope of Assistance
1. Nepal Industrial Development Corporation	For long-term loans (loan size greater than Nrs 7,00,000/-) to hotels/restaurants established outside the Kathmandu Valley
2. Commercial Banks (Nepal Bank Ltd and Rastriya Banijya Bank)	Lending to small-scale businesses that support the tourism industry indirectly
3. Agricultural Development Bank	Activities directly related to cottage and small-scale industries, small hotels and lodge operations, retail shops, food processing, etc. They do not provide financial support to large-scale ventures.

3. Technological Assistance

Successful entrepreneurs require advice on using materials, machinery and equipment, techniques and methods of production planning and control, and quality control of raw materials, etc. The main problems in providing technological assistance are shortage of adequately-trained personnel, of appropriate demonstration and training facilities, and of equipment and services. At present, to some extent these services are provided by MOTCA, DOT, and HMTTC. There are some NGOs, such as the Mother's Club Central Committee, Women's Entrepreneurship Association of Nepal, and the Annapurna Conservation Area Project which, with financial and technical assistance from the UNDP/ILO, provide limited technological assistance to women entrepreneurs in this sector.

4. Development Assistance

The joint HMG-UNDP-ILO project entitled, "Developing Women's Entrepreneurship in Tourism" is providing a range of assistance "packages" to develop women's entrepreneurship in Tourism. The types of assistance provided include:

- identifying feasible tourism-based female-managed enterprises.
- conducting and coordinating training for entrepreneurship development in tourism;

- linking prospective and needy entrepreneurs with project credit schemes and coordinating with other financial institutions for possible financial support; and
- providing technical back-stopping support to needy entrepreneurs for successful initiation, operation, and management of tourism-related enterprises.

(Source: Developing Women's Entrepreneurship in Tourism - UNDP/ILO/88/050)

Appendix 3

Prospects in Tourism for Women in Nepal

Scope for the direct participation of women in Tourism Development appears in the following areas:

- accommodation (hotels/lodges etc.),
- restaurants (including tea stalls along the trails)
- camping arrangements,
- picnic programme arrangements,
- trekking guide/porter services,
- tour guides,
- information services,
- clothing, equipment/accessories' rental,
- dance performances,
- traditional music performance,
- handicraft production and sales,
- traditional activity demonstrations, and
- other public and private sectors' employment in tourism.

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