

CHAPTER

## 7



RESEARCH REPORT

# Collective rural marketing for gender transformative change

Evidence from the Argeli value chain in Nepal



By

**Kamala Gurung**

*International Centre for  
Integrated Mountain  
Development  
Nepal*

E.S.

CH.1  
CH.2  
CH.3  
CH.4

**Janita Gurung**

*International Centre for  
Integrated Mountain  
Development  
Nepal*

CH.5  
CH.6  
**CH.7**  
CH.8

**Tashi Dorji**

*International Centre for  
Integrated Mountain  
Development  
Nepal*

← TC

**Yadav Uperty**

*Tribhuvan University,  
Kathmandu  
Nepal*

**Ram P Chaudhary**

*Tribhuvan University,  
Kathmandu  
Nepal*

**Nakul Chettri**

*International Centre for  
Integrated Mountain  
Development  
Nepal*

## About the authors

E.S.

### **Kamala Gurung, PhD,**

specialises in forestry and is currently working as a Gender and Natural Resource Management specialist at ICIMOD.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

### **Janita Gurung, PhD,**

is working as a Programme Coordinator of the Kangchenjunga Landscape Conservation Development Initiative (KLCDI) at ICIMOD. With expertise in biodiversity, Dr Gurung is interested in landscape ecology, cultural ecosystem services and community vulnerability.

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

### **Tashi Dorji, PhD,**

is working as a Programme Coordinator of the KLCDI at ICIMOD. Dr Dorji has a doctoral degree in animal husbandry and is interested in livestock and rangeland management.

### **Yadav Upadhyay, PhD,**

is currently working as an Assistant Professor at Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Dr Upadhyay is interested in the interface of social and natural sciences with a special focus on traditional ecological knowledge, human-environment interactions, biodiversity use and environmental policies.

← TC

### **Ram P. Chaudhary, PhD,**

is a Professor Emeritus at Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Prof. Dr Chaudhary is a renowned plant taxonomist and ecologist with a wide range of interests including ethnobotany, landscape ecology and natural resource management among others.

### **Nakul Chettri, PhD,**

is currently working as Regional Programme Manager, Transboundary Landscape Programme at ICIMOD. Dr Chettri has more than 20 years of experience in biodiversity conservation, landscape management, ecosystem services, climate change impact assessment, biodiversity informatics, and upscaling and promotion of transboundary landscapes.

**Email:** Nakul.Chettri@icimod.org

## Abstract

Collective action can strengthen rural market linkages through the engagement of women and other marginalised groups. It can help to address challenges such as small quantities, time poverty, illiteracy and limited rural mobility. An example of successful collective action is the Kangchenjunga Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KLCDI). The KLCDI and implementing partners worked to upgrade the Argeli (*Edgeworthia gardneri*) value chain in the Panchthar district of eastern Nepal. The Argeli plant provides the raw material for the production of hand-made paper and its white fibre is in high demand for the preparation of Japanese yuan. In

addition to making the value chain gender inclusive, four areas were pursued: i) process upgrading, ii) product upgrading, iii) function upgrading and iv) business enabling environment upgrading. Evidence from the KLCDI shows that collective action can improve the condition of women and the marginalised, such as small-scale farmers embedded within rural market systems. Despite these efforts, Argeli-enterprise development continues to face several challenges related to existing legislation and regulations, which also impact the women who benefit from these enterprises. Challenges include that Argeli production from private land is considered to be a

forest product; hurdles based on inappropriate Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) registration; establishment formalities; and additional royalties and taxation. These challenges discourage Argeli producers, mainly women and poor and marginalised groups. Effective dialogue with producers, traders and government stakeholders is necessary for the government to recognise the value of NTFPs in enhancing local livelihoods and providing benefits to marginalised groups, particularly women, so that they are encouraged to undertake NTFP-based enterprises.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

← TOC

## Keywords:

gender

value chain

collective action

rural marketing

Nepal

## Background

E.S.

The mountain people in the Hindu Kush Himalayas (HKH) region are one of the most impoverished populations in the world. A number of research studies have indicated that globalisation and climate change are likely to worsen food insecurity in the region more than in many places in the world (Hunjai et al., 2011). This is due to high dependence on local agricultural production and rampant natural resource depletion. Poor accessibility is another critical issue in this region, which is exacerbated by the lack of basic infrastructure and connectivity to markets, resulting in high transaction costs and network failures (Jodha, 2005; Gioli et al., 2019). Hence, there is an urgent need to find alternative livelihood options to ensure food security in this mountainous region. Even though women play an essential role in local food production and they have different vulnerabilities compared to men, they face social, economic and political barriers which limit their resilience capacities.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

← TC

To respond to these challenges, mountain people have been adopting risk-averting and resilience strategies for food security including livelihood diversification across on-farm and non-farm sectors (Wymann et al., 2013; Gioli et al., 2020). For instance, the outmigration of youth for economic reasons is common in the region. This comes at a cost to female residents, who must take on new roles and responsibilities, particularly in relation to food security, such as farm management and disaster preparedness. Women are not necessarily prepared to take on these roles and responsibilities. Therefore, the acquisition of new skills, capacities and knowledge is key to building resilient livelihoods and ensuring regional and local food security.

With a focus on strengthening the resilience and adaptive capacities of women, the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) initiated a number of activities based on the principles of collective action for marketing. At the heart of these interventions lies the engagement of a range of existing informal local institutions, such as women farmer groups. The Kangchenjunga Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative<sup>1</sup> (KLCDI) is one such example. The KLCDI, an action research project, focuses on agriculture and farming practices in the region with the vision of enhancing the resilience capacities of mountain people, particularly women, to overcome climate change

<sup>1</sup> The Kangchenjunga Landscape Conversation and Development Initiative (KLCDI) is committed to the conservation of the important biodiversity, ecosystems, and livelihoods of the Kangchenjunga Landscape, which stretches across Bhutan, Nepal along the southern side of Mountain Kangchenjunga.

and other risk factors (Molden et al., 2014; Gurung et al., 2016). The KLCDI has identified women and women's groups as key entry points for collective rural enterprise planning to enhance market access, build entrepreneurial skills and offer social and economic empowerment opportunities.

E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

## Methodology

### **Adopting a gender-inclusive value chain approach in mountain contexts**

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

In mountainous areas, most farmers/producers are smallholders who are weakly integrated into commodity markets, unable to compete with large-scale producers from the lowlands. This is because of low quantities, dispersed and unreliable production levels, remoteness, lack of processing technology and knowledge, and limited access to market information, as well as inadequate negotiation and management skills. The value chain approach is appropriate as it links small-scale producers with markets, stimulating growth, value addition and job creation (Schneemann & Vredeveld, 2015). ICIMOD has emphasised the value chain approach as a market-led approach that can strengthen adaptive and resilience capacities of smallholder farmers in mountain contexts (Hoermann et al., 2010; Joshi et al., 2016). However, there are growing concerns that for enterprises and businesses to remain profitable in the long term, the value chain must also be green and socially responsive. Successful value chain enterprises require an enabling institutional environment (e.g. supportive policy) to enhance their growth and strengthen value chain systems (Schneemann & Vredeveld, 2015).

← TC

The pilot sites in Panchthar district in Nepal revealed that the engagement of women in enterprises is often either "gender-blind" or "gender-neutral." It is erroneously assumed that men and women benefit equally from inclusion in value chains, or that enterprises can become gender-inclusive by simply forming women-led groups, without understanding and addressing the specific social and gendered barriers that women face (Kotru et al., 2020; Kantor et al., 2019). These assumptions are further compounded by production constraints such as restricted access to land, credit and inputs for women.

Key barriers faced by women include limited mobility outside their villages, restrictive socio-cultural norms, inadequate or lack of education and literacy, and time poverty. These barriers significantly constrain women's access to markets for agriculture or other rural enterprises.

To address these constraints, the KLCDI organised a series of discussions with both men and women between 2015 and 2016 with existing informal local institutions such as youth groups. The discussions sought to identify value chain products and services in the pilot sites in Nepal, India and Bhutan (Figure 1). Argeli is one of the value chain products that was identified specifically for the Sidhing village in the Panchthar district of Nepal. Focus group discussions were also conducted with women and marginalised groups as part of a needs assessment. The KLCDI leveraged local groups and institutions as a key entry point for the enhancement of collective rural marketing.

E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

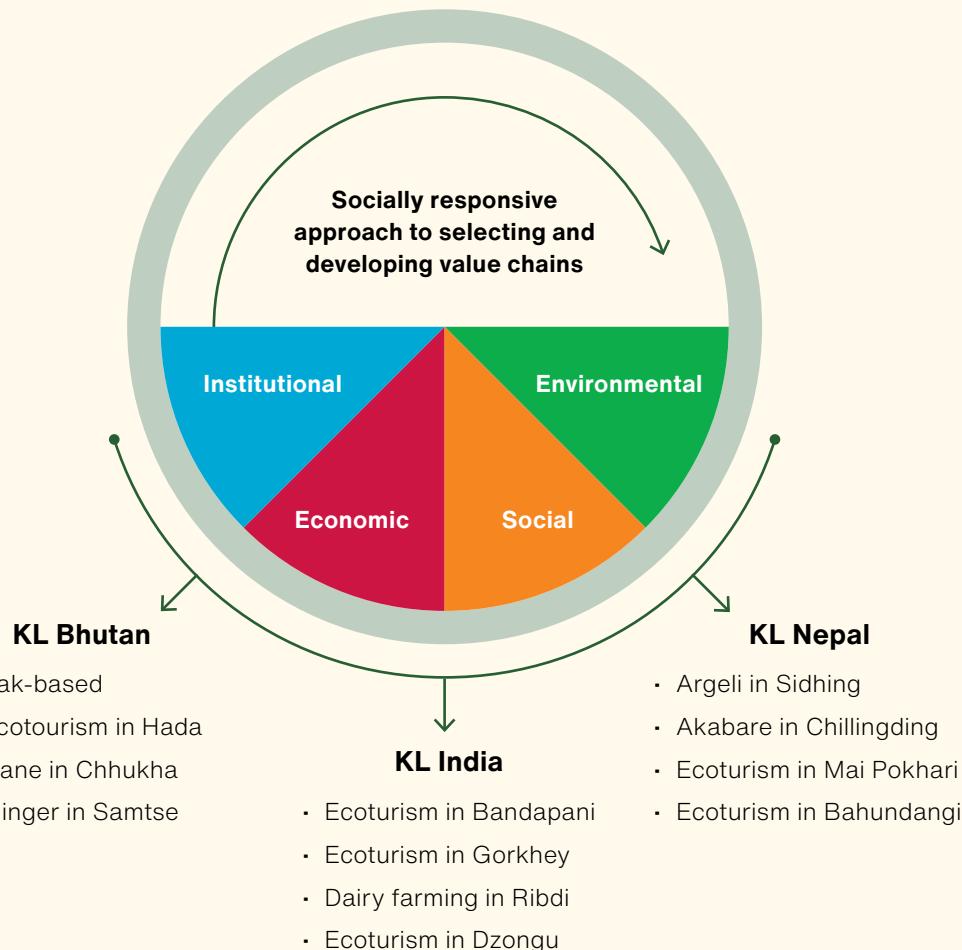
CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8



**Figure 1. Gender-inclusive approach to selecting and developing value chains in KLCDI pilot sites**

Source: Adapted from Schneemann & Vredeveld, 2015

Collective action is a mechanism that can enhance women's market access through collectives to reduce the vulnerability of unreliable, low production and increase the producers' negotiation power in value chain processes. More direct links between producers, sellers and consumers will benefit farmers and also reduce their vulnerability to exploitative practices by traders and intermediaries. Additional efforts to address social constraints with the objectives of livelihood diversification and improved livelihoods and food security further complement collective action.

### **Why was Argeli chosen as a value chain product in Eastern Nepal**

Panchthar district in eastern Nepal is the leading producer of Argeli in the country (Box 1 & Figure 2), followed by Ilam and Teplejung districts. Argeli production areas in Panchthar district are Sidin, Prangbung, Chaynghapu, Memeng and Phalaicha.

#### **BOX 1: ARGELI (*EDGEWORTHIA GARDNERI*)**

E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

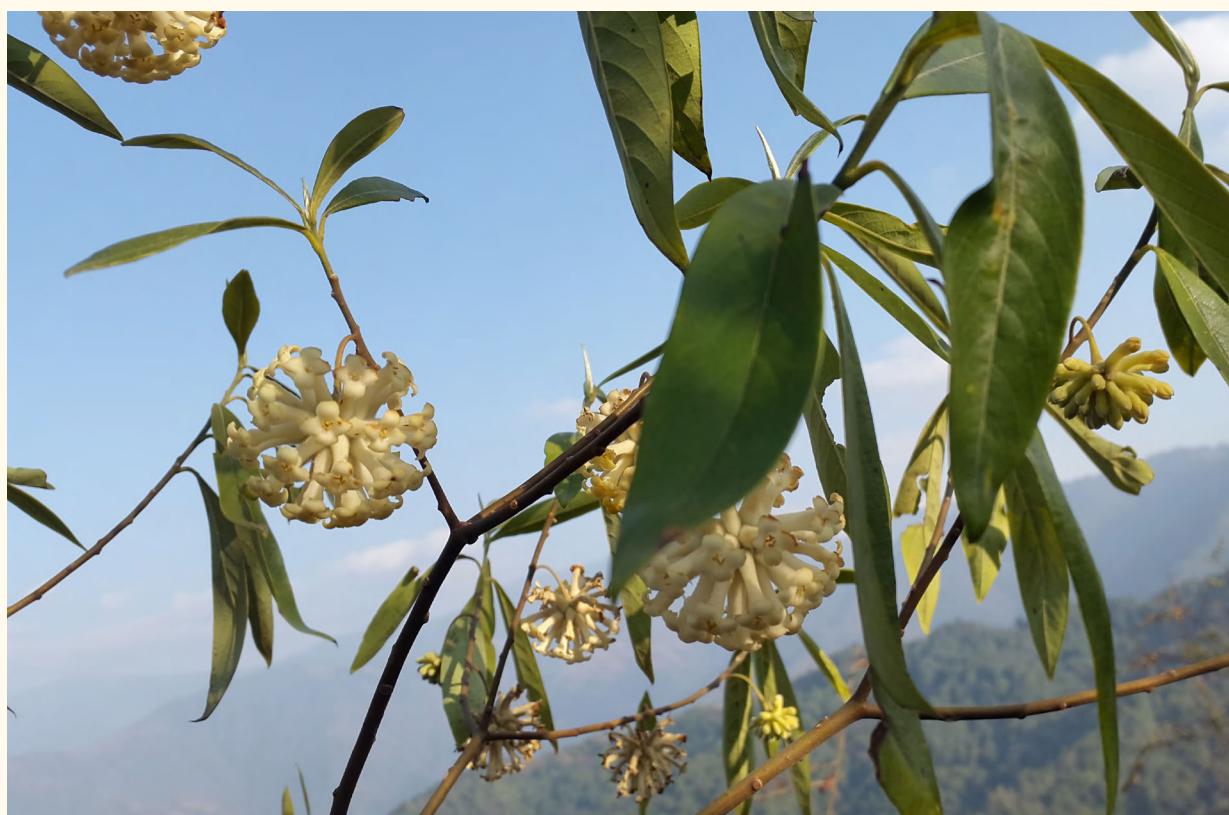
CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

← TC

Is an evergreen and fast-growing deciduous shrub found in the Kangchenjunga landscape (KL) at altitudes of 1800-2600m. The plant was traditionally used as bio-fencing and its fibre for household purposes like making rope and paper. Demonstrations have proven that Argeli can grow through vegetative propagations between May and July. The plants are ready to be harvested after three years of growth.



**Figure 2. Argeli plant in the flowering stage**

Photo credit: Kamala Gurung

Sidin lies within the Phalelung Rural Municipality of Panchthar district. It is a heterogeneous community composed of several ethnic groups including Limbu, Rai, Tamang, and other marginalised and disadvantaged groups. Apart from casual labour as a source of livelihood, people also depend on remittances, collection and trade of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and livestock rearing. Each family has at least one member who is part of a community group. In most cases, women form part of the mother's groups formed by the Department of Women and Children under Nepal's Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens. The collection of NTFPs is a primary source of income in Sidin. Argeli is one of those NTFPs, which is mainly cultivated and harvested on private land.

E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

Using the KLCDI's gender-inclusive value chain approach to diversify income options for the local population, Argeli was chosen for further upgrading and promotion, given that:

← TC

- Out of a total of 880 households in Sidin, around 300 households (33%) are already engaged in Argeli production (Value Chain Study Report, 2016). As Argeli producers often lack advanced processing techniques and information about the market, they sell their products to paper factories in Jhapa through middlemen/traders. As a result, low-quality Argeli bark is sold at a low price of approximately NPR 40 to 50/kg (USD 0.34 to 0.42/kg<sup>2</sup>). If the market is tapped, high-quality Argeli bark can be sold at much higher prices.
- A large area of land owned by the Limbu and Rai communities under the *kipat*<sup>3</sup> land tenure system lies fallow. Owners of such land are interested in cultivating Argeli to generate more income (Figure 3 & Figure 4).

**2** Exchange rate USD 1= NPR 18 (27/09/2020)

**3** The *kipat* land tenure system is a form of communal tenure with certain ethnic groups (e.g., Limbu). It is estimated that about 77,090 hectares of land were cultivated under *kipat* land tenure system before 1950. *Kipat* land cannot be alienated and sold to individuals outside the community (Acharya, 2008).



E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

← TC

**Figure 3. Agreli fibre drying in the open**

Photo credit: Nakul Chettri



**Figure 4. A woman making paper from Argeli fibre**

Photo credit: Kamala Gurung

The KLCDI, along with its implementing partners, the Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology (RECAST) and the Divisional Forest Office of Panchthar district, is working to increase the income of Argeli producers through collective rural marketing by adding value to Argeli products and changing market opportunities. For this, the KLCDI focuses on upgrading the Argeli value chain through four specific steps: i) process upgrading, ii) product upgrading, iii) function upgrading and iv) upgrading business enabling environment. These four upgrading strategies have also been identified as priority areas for gender-inclusive Argeli value chain promotion (Figure 5 & Figure 6).

E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

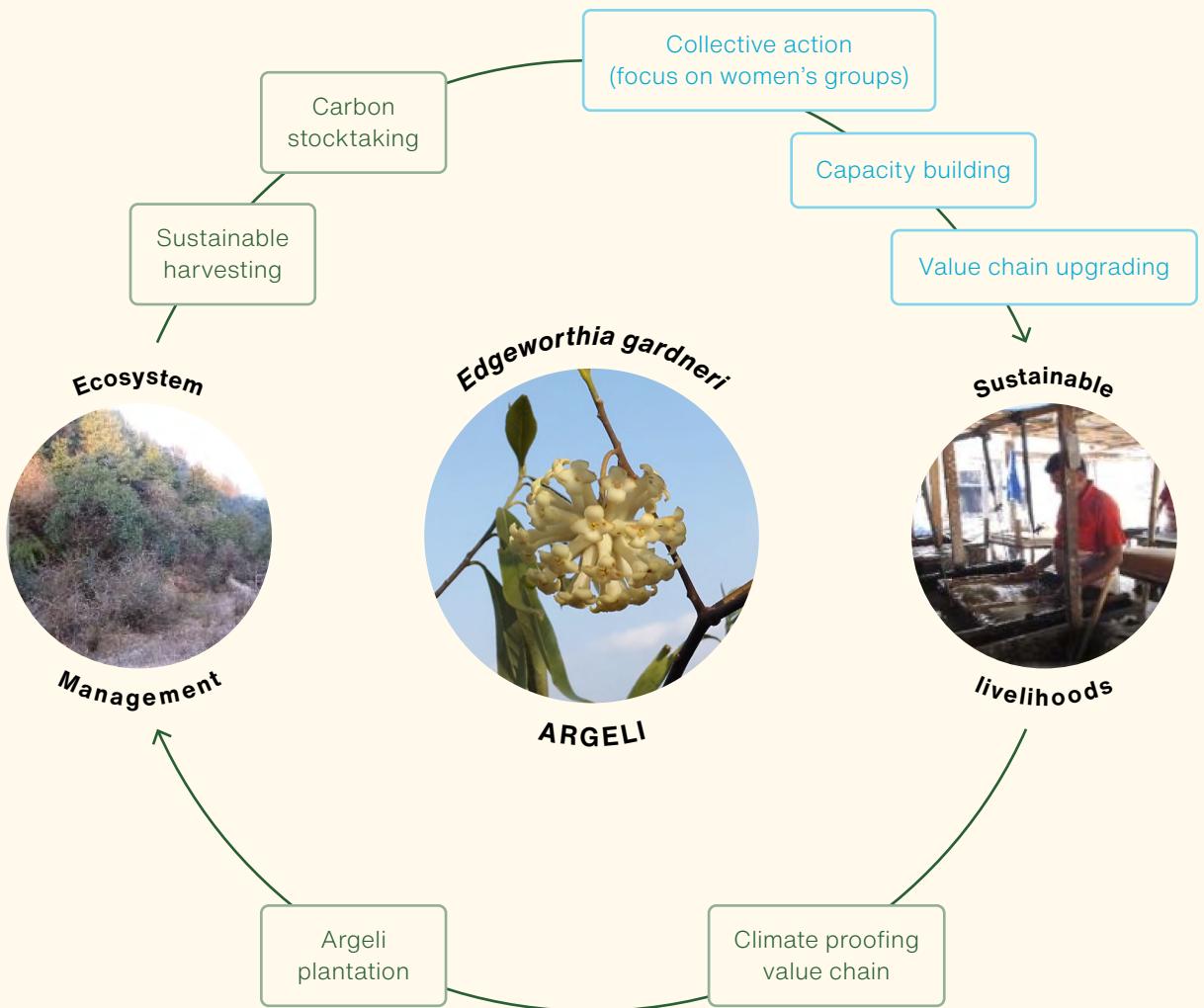
CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

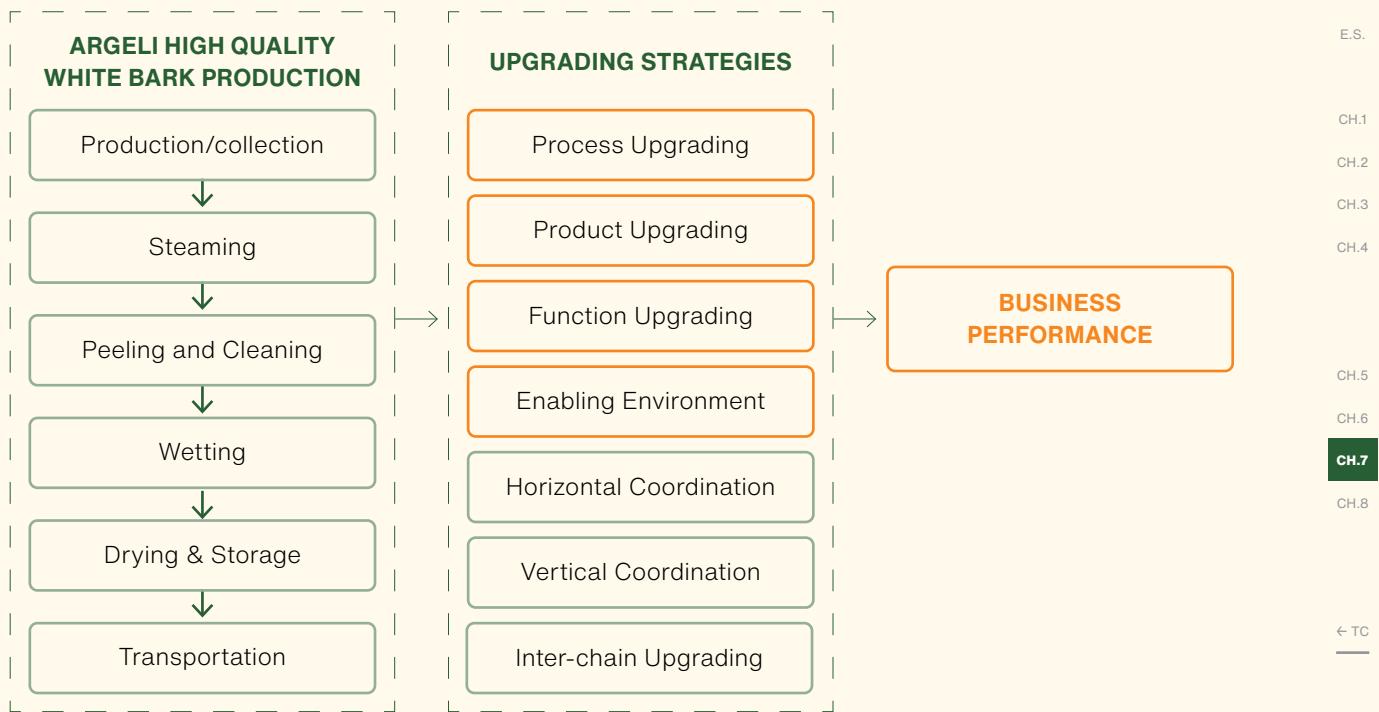
**CH.7**

CH.8



**Figure 5. Steps for upgrading a gender-inclusive Argeli value chain**

Photo credit: Kamala Gurung



**Figure 6. Selective steps for upgrading the Argeli value chain**

Sources: Modified from Mitchell et. al. 2009 & Kanpou Inc. 2016

## Results and findings

### Evidence of upgrading strategies for Argeli value chain promotion and interventions

**Process upgrading** is always expensive because it requires capital investments in enterprise operations. For Argeli, process upgrading requires improved harvesting equipment, storage facilities and boiling/cooking equipment. Women are particularly engaged in harvesting and boiling/cooking activities individually or collectively.

The KLCDI worked with the private sector (Kanpou Pvt. Ltd.)<sup>4</sup> along with Argeli producers in Sidin to achieve process upgrading. Kanpou Pvt. Ltd., along with

#### BOX 2: PROCESS UPGRADING

An increase in production efficiency results in reduced costs of production. This may involve improved organisation of the production process or use of new or improved technology.

##### Evidence:

- Argeli women producers switched from ordinary bark production to white bark production. Women are involved in removing the green cover and extracting the bark.
- Approximately 400,000 Argeli stems were planted in 7.6 acres of private fallow land in Sidin 5. About 500 kgs of Argeli bark can be harvested from 0.05 acres of land.

4 Kanpou Inc. is a private company based in Japan that has received a quote to supply Argeli raw materials for bank notes for the National Printing Bureau of Japan. The company also supplies other Argeli products such as fortune-telling paper and other handicraft products. This information was extracted from the feasibility report of Kanpou, 2016.

the KLCDI, provided techniques and services to make high-quality white Argeli bark through improved harvesting techniques, providing equipment for harvesting, along with purchasing high-quality white bark from these producers. The hands-on trainings improved techniques such as boiling, cooking and equipment processing, which were provided to the women and men producers. Such technical services assisted the women producers mainly from poor and marginalised groups to increase their efficiency and productivity. Furthermore, the Divisional Forest Office prioritised Argeli as one of the products for promotion in the district and supported Argeli cultivation in private land that was fallow.

E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8



← TC

**Figure 7. Mapping Argeli areas in Sidin village**

Photo credit: Kamala Gurung

As stated earlier, women from marginalised groups are actively engaged in Argeli production as a source of income. However, Argeli production is constrained by the small quantity of raw materials produced at the household level among poor and marginalised groups; therefore, KLCDI is working with existing local groups and institutions for collective rural enterprise development (see details in *Function upgrading*). Working as a collective provides benefits in terms of increasing the supply of materials; providing an appropriate platform to producers; and gaining access to training, information and advice from other actors such as buyers, which is one of the most effective platforms for small-scale producers. Accordingly, the KLCDI focused on three dimensions for upgrading Argeli processing:

- Leveraging existing local groups and institutions (e.g. mother groups, saving credit groups)
- Building capacity for preparation of white bark
- Cultivation of Argeli on private and community land

E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

← TC



**Figure 8. Argeli plantation area supported by the KLCDI**

Photo credit: Kamala Gurung

**Product upgrading:** The KLCDI realised that one of the best ways to attract Argeli producers, mostly women and those from poor socio-economic groups who are engaged in this enterprise, is to invest their resources, particularly labour, in upgrading their product so that they can fetch higher prices. Inadequate and insufficient processing technology, along with the lack of market information, hindered Argeli producers in Sidin from further developing their products. Currently, Argeli bark is traded in its crude low-quality form to local traders who supply the bark to small-scale paper factories. The KLCDI focused its interventions for product upgrading in the following dimensions:

#### **BOX 3: PRODUCT UPGRADING**

Qualitative improvement of a product, making it more desirable to the consumer and earning a higher unit price.

#### **Evidence:**

- Preparation of white Argeli bark fetches a higher price of 3 USD to 4 USD per kilogram as compared to current bark at 0.36 USD per kilogram.

- Hands-on trainings on cleaning, grading and packaging Argeli bark and making white bark were provided to women and youth through groups; E.S.
- Building partnerships with the private sector (e.g. Kanpuo Pvt. Ltd.) for collective marketing so that individual women and poor households can sell the Argeli bark for higher prices; CH.1
- Facilitating collective storage for Argeli bark. CH.2

Through such measures, Argeli producers are ensured higher prices for their upgraded products. This has incentivised them to procure more labour, to invest in the necessary equipment and to follow the processing techniques to produce high-quality white bark.

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8



← TC

**Figure 9. Storage system for the Agreli fibre**

Photo credit: Nakul Chettri



**Figure 10. Argeli fibre used for Japanese yuan**

Photo credit: Kamala Gurung

**Function upgrading:** Argeli producers from Sidin used to sell their Argeli bark individually through a trader/middleperson. The KLCDI initiated upgrading the current approach through a collective-action approach for Argeli enterprise development. Daju Bhai Jadibuti Utpadan tatha Prasodhan Sahakari Sansthan from Sidin and Indreni Sahakari Sansthan, two cooperatives composed of a majority of women and marginalised ethnic groups, were taken into consideration in upgrading their approach. These institutions directly negotiate with exporters (e.g. Kanpuo Pvt. Ltd.) and government agencies for Argeli plantation support. Moreover, coming together in cooperatives enables members to address socio-cultural norms, particularly the constraints faced by women and marginalised groups in terms of lack of mobility, capital and market information.

#### **BOX 4: FUNCTION UPGRADING**

This is related to changing functions in the value chain in order to increase the overall value of activities. This can be done by adding new actors to horizontally coordinated chains or shortening chains by excluding intermediaries or traders.

#### **Evidence:**

- Argeli women producers are selling through cooperatives or groups instead of selling individually.



E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

← TC

**Figure 11. Group discussion with local groups/institutions**

Photo credit: Kamala Gurung

**Business enabling environment upgrading:** Improving the Argeli business environment by addressing the constraints and filling the gaps, particularly regarding rules and regulations, has been a central point in the KLCDI's Argeli value chain promotion. Although Argeli is collected from private land, traders from Panchthar district mentioned that they require permission from the Divisional Forest Office for its collection and trade. Furthermore, they are required to pay taxes at several places (DFO office, range post, etc.) because Argeli is considered a forest product.

## Reflections

This chapter makes the case for developing Argeli enterprises through the application of step-wise upgrading approaches of this crop with a gender lens in mind. With this, the Argeli enterprise case demonstrates how gender and social integration can be incorporated into value chain selection and marketing by engaging with existing women's groups. Gender-inclusive value chain intervention will result in more sustainable enterprises or businesses and a more equitable distribution of the benefits.

### BOX 5: UPGRADING THE BUSINESS-ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

A bottom-up approach is considered to influence and reform policy, rules and the regulatory setting of the targeted value chain.

#### Evidence:

- KLCDI and partners brought together Argeli producers, traders and government stakeholders to discuss its categorisation as a 'forest' product, despite being largely cultivated and harvested from private land. This categorisation creates hurdles, particularly for traders, who must pay a product tax fee. Argeli tax payment exemption was the priority topic for further follow-up. Tax exemption initiatives will encourage the creation of Argeli plantations and enterprises, which will directly benefit women from poor and marginalised groups.

As stated earlier, Argeli is an NTFP that is mainly cultivated and harvested collectively on private land in Sidin, with smaller quantities being harvested from national forests and leasehold forests. One-third of households in Sidin are engaged in Argeli production, and the KLCDI has implemented a number of strategies for upgrading Argeli value chain enterprises. However, a number of challenges are still present in relation to the existing legislation and regulations of the Government of Nepal. These challenges affect the women benefiting from Argeli value chain enterprise:

E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

**1. Formalities and procedures for Argeli harvesting:** Argeli is mostly harvested from private land rather than from forest areas. However, the categorisation of Argeli as a ‘forest’ product means that complex formalities and procedures are involved in the export and trade of Argeli products (e.g. bark) outside the district. Export formalities involve a number of government and non-government organisations, including product certification by the Department of Plant Resources, certificate of origin by the Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and income tax certification by the relevant taxation authority (Ojha, 2000). Such procedures discourage women and poor socio-economic groups from cultivating on their private land.

← TC

## **2. Inappropriate NTFP-based enterprise registration and establishment formalities:**

As stated earlier, out of a total of 880 households in Sidin around 300 households (33%) are already engaged in Argeli production, mainly women from poor and marginalised groups. These households and local communities prefer to add value to the raw Argeli bark and subsequently market them through collective enterprises. However, forestry regulations inhibit them from doing so. For instance, regulations require that forest-based enterprises be established at a distance of 3 km (in mountains) and 5 km (in Terai) from forest areas (Subedi, 2010). Such regulations function as significant hurdles to establish and operate NTFP-based enterprises in mountain areas. Furthermore, a consensus is required from three offices – the Divisional Forest Office, Land Survey Office and the Cottage and Small Industry Authority – for business registration to establish NTFP-based enterprises (Group discussion, 2016).

**3. Royalties and taxation:** The Divisional Forest Office collects fees from national forests according to the rates specified in the regulations. However, determining royalty rates is arbitrary. Women and poor producers who are engaged in Argeli enterprises are discouraged from trading their produce due to the many taxes imposed on the trade of NTFPs at local, district and inter-district levels. In fact, taxation was found to be as high as 200% - a concern further compounded by the absence of a well-developed system of determining royalties.

Effective dialogues among men and women producers, traders and government stakeholders are necessary to recognise the value of NTFPs in enhancing local livelihoods. The resulting improvement in legislation and removal of regulatory hurdles will help to mitigate barriers while encouraging the establishment of collective marketing that will provide benefits to marginalised groups, particularly women, so that they are encouraged to undertake NTFP-based enterprises.

E.S.

CH.1

CH.2

CH.3

CH.4

CH.5

CH.6

**CH.7**

CH.8

## References

- Acharya, R.B. (2008). Land Tenure and Land Registration in Nepal. Integrating Generations FIG Working Week. Stockholm, Sweden 14–19.  
[http://www.fig.net/resources/proceedings/fig\\_proceedings/fig2008/papers/ts07b/ts07b\\_02\\_acharya\\_2747.pdf](http://www.fig.net/resources/proceedings/fig_proceedings/fig2008/papers/ts07b/ts07b_02_acharya_2747.pdf). ← TC
- Gioli, G., Dasgupta, P. and Gerlitz, J.Y. (2020). ‘Understanding and Tackling Poverty and Vulnerability in Mountain Livelihoods in the Hindu Kush Himalaya’. In: *The Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment*. Kathmandu, Nepal: ICIMOD.  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92288-1\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92288-1_12).
- Gurung, K., Bhandari, H. and Paris, T. (2016). ‘Transformation from Rice Farming to Commercial Aquaculture in Bangladesh: Implications for Gender, Food Security, and Livelihood’. *Gender, Technology and Development* 20 (1):49–80.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0971852415618747>.
- Hoermann, B., Choudhary, D., Choudhury, D. and Kollmair, M. (2010). *Integrated Value Chain Development as a Tool for Poverty Alleviation in Rural Mountain Areas: An Analytical and Strategic Framework*. Kathmandu, Nepal: ICIMOD.  
<https://doi.org/10.53055/icimod.523>.
- Hunjai, K. and Gerlitz J.Y. (2011). *Understanding Mountain Poverty in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas - Regional Report for Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan*. Technical Paper. Kathmandu, Nepal: International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development Kathmandu. <https://doi.org/10.53055/icimod.553>.
- Jodha, N. S. (2005). ‘Adaptation Strategies against Growing environmental and social vulnerabilities in mountain areas. Policy and Development’. *Himalayan Journal of Sciences* 3 (5):33–42. <https://doi.org/10.3126/hjs.v3i5.459>.
- Joshi, S., Rasul, G. and Shrestha, A. J., (2016). *Pro-poor and Climate Resilient Value Chain Development. Operational Guidelines for the Hindu Kush Himalayas*. ICIMOD Working Paper 2016/1. Kathmandu, Nepal: ICIMOD.
- Kantor, P., Morgan, M. and Choudhury, A. (2015). ‘Amplifying Outcomes by Addressing Inequality: The Role of Gender-transformative Approaches in Agricultural Research for Development’. *Gender, Technology and Development* 19 (3):292–319.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0971852415596863>.
- Kotru, R., Pradhan, N., Shakya, B. and Amatya, S. (2020). *Beyond Boundaries: Contouring Transboundary Landscapes in the Hindu Kush Himalaya*. Kathmandu, Nepal: ICIMOD.  
<https://doi.org/10.53055/icimod.769>.

- Mitchell, J. (2009). *Trading Up: How a Value Chain Approach Can Benefit the Rural Poor*. London: COPLA Global Overseas Development Institute. E.S.
- Molden, D., Verma, R., and Sharma, E. (2014). 'Gender Equality as a Key Strategy for Achieving Equitable and Sustainable Development in Mountains: The Case of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas'. *Mountain Research and Development* 34 (3):297–300. CH.1  
<https://doi.org/10.1659/mrd-journal-d-14-00064>. CH.2  
CH.3  
CH.4
- Ojha, R.H. (2000). *Current Policy Issues in NTFP Development in Nepal*. Kathmandu, Nepal: Asia Network for Small-scale Bio-resources. CH.5  
<http://lib.icimod.org/record/10559/files/169.pdf>. CH.6
- Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology (RECAST). (2016). 'Argeli (Edgeworthia gardneri) Value Chain, 2016'. Unpublished paper. Kathmandu, Nepal: Tribhuvan University. CH.7  
CH.8
- Schneemann, J. and Vredeveld, T. (2015). *Guidelines for Value Chain Selection: Integrating Economic, Environmental, Social and Institutional Criteria*. Eschborn, Germany: GIZ & ILO. ← TC
- Subedi, P.B. (2010). *Policy & Regulatory Environment for Conservation & Sustainable Use of NTFPs in Nepal*. Kathmandu, Nepal: Asia Network for Small-scale Bio-resources.  
<https://ansab.org.np/storage/product/policy-regulatory-environment-for-conservation-sustainable-use-of-ntfps-1580203736.pdf>.
- Wymann von Dach, S., Romeo R., Vita, A., Wurzinger, M., and Kohler T. (2013). *Mountain Farming Is Family Farming: A Contribution from Mountain Areas to the International Year of Family Farming*. Rome: FAO, CDE and BOKU.