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Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture & NRM

Exclusion and Inclusion of Women in the Forest Sector

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The Forests Dialogue

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Outline

- **The Case:**
 - - women's roles in forest management
 - - household needs for forest products/services
 - - success stories of women's management of forest resources
- **The Evidence** of women's exclusion
- **Causes**

Women's roles

- Primary users and managers of forests
- Holders of local knowledge
- High dependence on NTFPs for livelihoods
- Roles in forest protection, not only harvesting



- Reliant on NTFPs for household energy needs, livestock feed, soil nutrients, medicine, food and income.



Success stories of women's management of forests

- Green Belt movement in Kenya
- Women's groups managing forests in Nepal
- Other related sectors: agriculture, water, livestock



and yet...high levels of exclusion at local, professional, institutional and policy levels in relation to :

- forest governance systems
- benefit sharing systems
- capacity building opportunities
- education and jobs
- policy making fora

1. Forest governance

Few women in forest management governance bodies at community level



Participation



Low levels of
'meaningful'
participation by
women in meetings
related to forestry
activities.. locally,
nationally and
globally.

Perceptions about Leadership

Perception that women cannot lead, based on their lower education levels, leads to denial of their roles in governance mechanisms.



2. Benefit sharing

- management plans of CF and REDD+ focus much more on men's interests
- men decide about timber whilst women are left with subsistence products



3. Capacity building



- Extension activities miss women by targeting Heads of Households
- Assumption that skills and knowledge are passed down to wives

Women in the workforce: Professionals

- Norms related to dress, behaviour in forestry schools
- Few women professionals (10 -14%)
- Often kept in offices to do administrative jobs



4. Policy making fora

- Very few women in senior level positions of govt. forestry departments
- Women not identified as stakeholder group in global bodies



Causes

Forest policies and organizations overlook women's specific needs and contributions, in part because of the identification of forestry with timber and men.

Lack of awareness of gender issues within environment and forestry institutions.



- And conservation approaches that restrict human activity and value biodiversity.



Socio-cultural factors

- cultural values
- perceptions of male and female roles in society
- traditions

- Institutional biases that reinforce ‘appropriate’ roles for women, based on socio-cultural norms and homosocial behaviour





- few women professionals to challenge these norms
- results in a failure to recognize and legitimate women's roles, knowledge and contributions to forest management.

Expectations of this Scoping Dialogue

Address 3 questions:

1. Are there norms that are common to forestry institutions around the world? Which of these support or obstruct women's inclusion?

2. Indigenous Peoples have enjoyed a relatively high degree of attention to their interests within the forestry sector. Why have women's interests not been afforded the same level of attention?



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3. Why has research and knowledge on women's roles in forest management not been effective in bringing about their inclusion in the forest sector?



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- Bring in perspectives of professionals within private sector, NGOs, and government
- Perspective of community women
- Perspectives of women in developing AND developed countries.