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Gender and the Forest Investment Program



When you hear
“gender,” what comes
to mind?

Defining gender

- Sex: differences of a strictly biological nature between men and women.
- Gender: the set of social, cultural, political, legal and economic characteristics socially allocated as a function of sex from birth onwards.
- Implications?
 - Gender-based, socially-ascribed characteristics determine the distribution of power within a society
 - We cannot speak of women or men as universal beings
 - We can change them

Gender equality

- NOT only about women
- But: promoting gender equality often requires a particular focus on women in order to address historical and existing inequalities
- However, this does not preclude activities that address men's specific needs, where doing so will contribute to gender equality.

Why do we care?

- Gender targeting makes programs cost-effective by directing resources to actual need & demand
- Women's active engagement in project management has been linked to better project and programme outcomes
- Investing in women and girls is considered a key breakthrough strategy for achieving the MDGs
- CIF Trust Fund Committees and Sub-committees are increasingly recognizing and demanding attention to gender issues within CIF investment plans and projects

Situation analysis: FIP

- For the purpose of the FIP 'indigenous peoples and local communities' includes tribal communities and implies equal emphasis on the rights of men and women."
- *Operational Guidelines*: state that investment strategies should identify co-benefits, including gender equality, by "prioritizing activities that...help reduce poverty by enhancing economic growth or by improving services to the poor, taking into account the gender dimension of poverty."
- *Monitoring*:
 - Allows for independent assessment of gender dimensions of forest governance;
 - National steering committee should take gender considerations into account
 - M&E results should be sex-disaggregated where appropriate
- Project and programme review criteria: include "identification of co-benefits from FIP investments," and "stakeholder involvement and consultation plans," both of which explicitly recognize gender dimensions.
- Included a Social Development and Gender Specialist as part of its expert group



Forests and Agriculture:

Why do they matter
for gender equality?

Why consider gender in forest and agriculture programs?

- Gender-based activities
- Food security
- Benefit-sharing
- Decision-making power
- Positions of women and men



Gender-based roles in forestry

Women

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

Men

- Involved in extractive activities
- Often hold decision-making power
- Viewed as technical experts

Gender is an important aspect of forestry and agriculture as inequity between males and females are manifest in these sectors

Benefits derived from these activities are often not equally shared and decision-making regarding the implementation of forestry and agricultural activities is often left to men, while the growing of the stock is left to the women

There is therefore a need to transform programmes and organisations by strengthening the position of women engaged in both professional spheres of forestry and agriculture and enhancing their ability to assist rural women

Women in agriculture ensure the food security of their families to a large degree

(Gender Based) Risks

- Lack of secure land rights and tenure
- Restrictions on forest use
- Lack of recognition of women's roles and responsibilities
- Focus on technical aspects
- Exclusion from training/employment opportunities
- "Gender" in words only

If women's rights are ignored, REDD could result in women's restricted access to forests and NTFPs, increasing time and distance to collect fuel wood, food, other products and further marginalizing them.

Greater degree of unemployment (South Africa : Women 53% as opposed to 37% for men)

Challenges

- Institutional biases that determine “appropriate” roles for women, based on socio-cultural norms
- Exclusion from decision-making
- Participation: Confidence to speak out in community and other meetings
- Limited free time and mobility
- Exclusion from benefit sharing as a right
- Lack of awareness of gender issues within forestry institutions

Exclusion from decision-making

Participation : Confidence to speak out in community and other meetings

Lack of recognition of women’s roles and responsibilities, which are major in forestry and agriculture

Limited free time and mobility due to household and mothering responsibilities and the rural nature of the environment in which they are often living

Exclusion from benefit sharing as a right

Adopting a gender approach

Gender aspects need to be taken into account at all stages of a project:

- Conceptualization
- Planning
- Implementation
- Training programs
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Benefit-sharing mechanisms

A positive example

- Out-growers schemes in South Africa



Promoting gender equality through the FIP

- Stakeholders
- Benefit-sharing mechanisms
- Equitable representation in governance mechanisms
- Land tenure rights
- Safeguards

Things to consider

- Political will is essential : Seek high-level buy-in
- Joint missions, stakeholder consultations and program staff are critical: include gender expertise
- Ensure that capacity building programs and technical trainings target both women and men
- Collect sex-disaggregated data
- Involve social/gender ministries



Some key questions

- Has the project/programme assessed potential for contributing to gender equality and women's empowerment through planned activities?
- Does the project include specific, measurable actions and deliverables related to gender mainstreaming, gender equality and women's empowerment?
- Has sex-disaggregated baseline data been collected?
- Have gender specialists or representatives from women's stakeholders groups participated in all steps of the programme or project cycle?
- Are benefit-sharing mechanisms accessible to all members of the community?
- Have all possible steps been taken to ensure gender equity in the recruitment of project staff and consultants?

Discussion questions

How might REDD+ affect the different roles and status of women and gender relations?

How might different roles and status of women and men affect the achievement of REDD+ programs?

How have the plans in your country taken gender considerations into account? What tools would you need in order to facilitate this process?

Thank you!

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