



How forestry can benefit from gender analysis

1 Gender analysis enhances forestry development

2 Training is the key to developing gender analysis skills

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1 Gender analysis enhances forestry development

Forestry development policies began to move away from a production and industrial sector focus towards a rural development approach during the 1980s. Community/social/participatory forestry efforts were designed to address the interrelated problems of environmental degradation and rural poverty, promoting local people as the agents and beneficiaries of forestry activities. More recently, as key promoters of “sustainable development”, forestry policies aim to build upon the knowledge of local women and men, their needs and priorities, and to integrate forestry with agriculture, livestock production and small-scale industries.

Implementing the new forestry policies requires detailed information so that rural people’s lives provide the starting point for planning. But detailed information about communities is seldom available. Gender analysis provides a tool to help fill this information gap.

Gender analysis is a practical tool for examining community diversity and the implications of this diversity for forestry development. It focuses on the activities and resources of both women and men, clarifying where they differ and where they complement each other. The information is used to answer such planning questions as *Do the development objectives address the needs and priorities of both women and men? Do these differ? Who wants to participate in each of the development activities planned – women? men? both?*



Authors
Vicki L. Wilde
Arja Vainio-Mattila

Editor
Bonita Brindley

Design and layout
Giulio Sansonetti
Graeme Thomas

Illustrations
Pulika Calzini

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Women's work and men's work differ from place to place

In Nepal, Bhutan and West Bengal, collecting leaf litter is mainly women's work. In Bangladesh, women care for trees grown on the homestead. In Sri Lanka, women process tree products for subsistence and for sale in the market. In Bangladesh, Nepal and Thailand, women collect fuelwood. But in Bhutan and Sri Lanka, men help women do the same job. In Thailand and India women collect such non-wood forest products as herbs, mushrooms and medicinal plants, while in Sri Lanka, both women and men harvest tree products.

Gender analysis draws on the understanding that every development situation is unique. No other individual, family, village or nation has the same set of resources to manage with the same people, in the same time frame, or with the same constraints.

Gender analysis can be used to overcome obstacles that may prevent institutions from implementing policy mandates which include social concerns in forestry development. Currently, gender analysis is rarely used in forestry development because awareness of its importance is fairly new, and because most forestry workers have not had access to the necessary information and training.

GENDER-DISAGGREGATED INFORMATION IS USEFUL

Planning for "people-centred" development requires precise information about who the "people" are. They are not a homogeneous group. The "people" include both women and men. The "poor" are poor women and poor men. The "children" are girls and boys. Everywhere, and within every socio-economic group, the lives of females and males are structured in fundamentally different ways. A gender-based division of labour is universal; but it differs by culture, geographic location and socio-economic group.

It is recognized that gender is only one of many important social characteristics – along with ethnicity, race, caste, class, age and occupation. (These characteristics are included in gender analysis.) It is important to remember, however, that gender cuts across all the others. Whatever their class or ethnicity, women and men have different roles, responsibilities, resources, constraints and opportunities – because of gender. Therefore, information is not precise enough for forestry programme planning unless it is disaggregated by

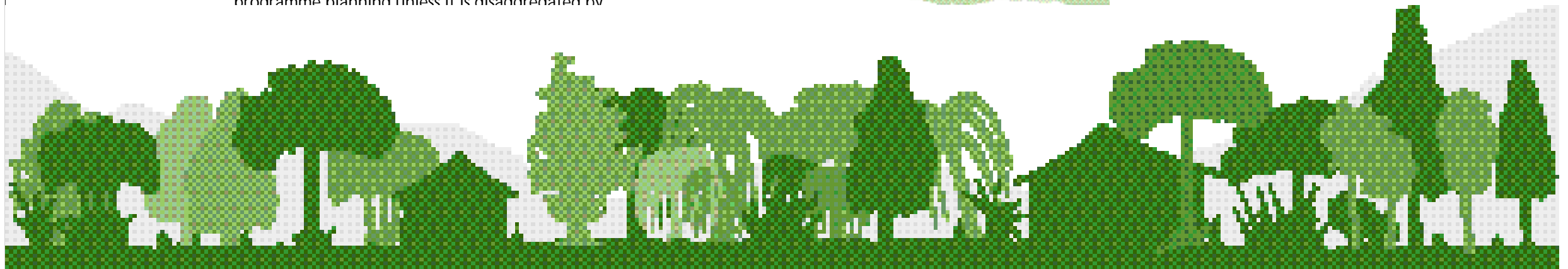
GENDER ANALYSIS CONTRIBUTES TO POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS OF FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT

Even forestry development that is deemed successful in environmental terms may have components which result in undesired social changes or trends. Everyone recognizes that deforestation reduces people's access to forest foods, building materials, fuelwood, medicinal plants and wildlife. But it is disturbing to discover that afforestation and protection programmes can also decrease people's access to forest resources. This creates hardship for everyone, but since women are often responsible for more subsistence-related forestry activities than are men, women's burdens may be substantially increased if their access to forestry resources is jeopardized. This means that their ability to contribute to other productive activities may be diminished.

Development programmes which aim to address both environmental and social needs require gender-disaggregated information to determine who does what—women or men or both—and therefore who benefits or loses when development intervenes.

More work for women

A stone wall was built to protect the forest in a watershed area that is the most important water source for the people who live in the nearby capital city. But the wall cut off the local community from their only source of fuelwood, leaf litter and fodder. The army was sent to make sure the people kept out of the forest. Now the women who collect these forest products have to work secretly at night to elude the army guards—so it takes them seven hours instead of three or four to gather a load of fuelwood.



Women and men have different needs and priorities

A group of men was invited to a village meeting to jointly plan a community forestry project. The men told foresters that they wanted to plant hardwood tree species to make furniture and wood carvings to sell. Three thousand hardwood seedlings were provided. They all died. Why? Because in the village it was the task of women to care for seedlings; no one had told them that the seedlings were coming. Another meeting was held. This time, the women were included. Foresters learned that the women preferred soft wood fast-growing species for fuelwood and fodder. When the project provided seedlings of both types, satisfying the needs of both women and men, the women planted and watered all of them.

GENDER ANALYSIS CONTRIBUTES TO FORESTRY PROGRAMME SUCCESS

A second reason for examining gender roles in each specific development context is to avoid programme failure. Development initiatives which aim to improve the livelihood of local people must take into account gender-based divisions of labour, gender-based access to resources and control over those resources. Otherwise, decisions will be based on mistaken assumptions.

Gender-disaggregated information reveals the relationship between people and forests, how women use and manage forest resources, how men use and manage forest resources, and the importance of these activities for subsistence and income. Without such information, forestry development efforts may not be appropriately designed and may result in negative impacts or failure to reach objectives.

Gender-disaggregated information also reveals what rural women and men know and what they need. Women and men are both sources of silvicultural knowledge and sustainable resource management practices, but each may be knowledgeable about different species and practices, according to their activities. Building on local knowledge is a way to enhance forestry programme success.

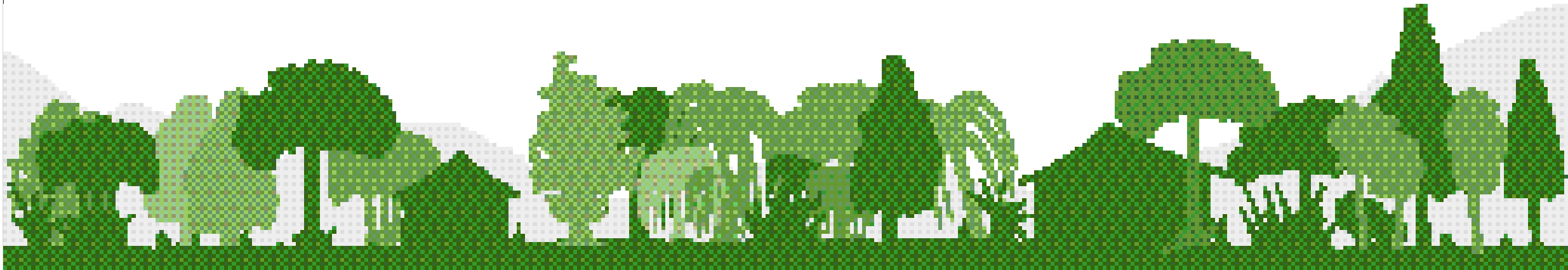
Women and men have different specialized skills

In an agroforestry programme area, raising seedlings on the homestead is a women's task. But during training on nursery skills, only men were selected to participate. Consequently men were trained for women's work and the survival rate of the seedlings was low.

GENDER ANALYSIS HELPS MAKE EFFICIENT USE OF SCARCE RESOURCES

A third reason for using gender analysis is that when the roles of women and men are incorrectly assumed or overlooked, achievement of development objectives can be delayed. Although the programmes can sometimes be salvaged, millions of development dollars may be lost in the process of analysing what went wrong and discovering the means to correct it.

Whether women, or men, or both, should be participants in specific forestry activities is a contextual question. The answer depends on the roles and priorities of the women and men in specific locations.



2 Training is the key to developing gender analysis skills

Gender analysis training raises awareness about what gender is, how gender differences manifest themselves at the local level, and how gender roles interact with forestry development.

During gender analysis training workshops, forestry workers practise using a methodology for understanding community diversity – by gender and age, class, race, caste, or ethnicity – and acquire skills to assess the implications of this diversity for specific forestry activities, such as agroforestry, afforestation, watershed management and so forth. Forestry sector workers learn to move beyond “the community”, “the villagers” or “the farmers”, and to ask such questions as *Who are these “farmers”?*, and *Who does – and does not – benefit from the new agroforestry scheme?*

Gender analysis workshops are based on a participatory training approach, during which forestry workers explore, for themselves, the importance of ensuring the participation of local women and men in the planning and implementation of forestry activities. They also learn how to apply gender analysis to their own work as planners, foresters, extensionists and rangers.

Forestry personnel trained in the use of gender analysis can increase institutional capacity to address both social and environmental concerns in forestry development. This contributes to more sustainable, equitable, and effective forestry development.

Women and men have access to, and control over, different resources

In Bhutan, land is inherited by daughters from their mothers, and a husband joins his wife's family after marriage. In most cases, property is registered in the woman's name. All trees are owned by the state. In Bangladesh, women have the legal right to own land and trees, but in practice, nearly all property is controlled by men. Men manage the family income as well as women's labour. Occasionally women own property in their own name under Muslim property inheritance law.

THE “FRAMEWORK” FOR GENDER ANALYSIS AND FORESTRY

The Gender Analysis & Forestry Framework is a step-by-step tool for carrying out gender analysis. Gender analysis training familiarizes the trainees with this tool. There are four *Profiles* or *Steps* in the Framework which help trainees to raise questions, analyse information, and develop strategies to increase women's and men's participation in and benefits from forestry programmes. These are concerned with:

- 1 the development context or patterns in an area, answering the questions *What is getting better?* and *What is getting worse?*
- 2 women's and men's activities and roles, answering the question *Who does what?*
- 3 women's and men's access to and control over resources, answering the questions *Who has what?* and *Who needs what?*, and
- 4 the forestry programme actions needed, answering the question *What should be done to close the gaps between what women and men need?* and *What development delivers?*

Two versions of the Gender Analysis & Forestry Framework are available in the Gender Analysis and Forestry Training Package. The Management-level Framework is appropriate for policy-makers, planners and programme and project managers. The Field-level Framework is appropriate for field staff, including extension workers and rangers. To institutionalize gender analysis in forestry development work, it is recommended that training be held with both levels.



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