

Participatory Forest Management GENDER MAINSTREAMING



Centre for People's Forestry

About us

Centre for People's Forestry (CPF) is a professional NGO working in community forestry in Central India. CPF became an independent institute in 2002 until when it was part of Centre for World Solidarity (CWS). The initial conception of CPF of building and strengthening the stakeholder network programme was launched as early as in 1996. However, the team of CPF began to function independently as a wing within CWS from April 2000 which led to the formation of CPF as an independent institute in 2002.

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PREFACE

During the transition in Andhra Pradesh (AP) from Joint Forest Management (JFM) to Community Forest Management (CFM), Community Extension Workers (CEWs) were engaged either through NGOs or directly by the Forest Department in AP to facilitate enhanced participation and involvement of community in the management of forest.

Centre for People's Forestry was requested by AP Forest Department/Forest Academy to develop a ToT module cum manual to train the CEWs. Subsequently, CPF, based on its field experience over eight years as well as with inputs from other materials, brought out this training manual in Telugu with AP-specific cases and illustrations, which was jointly published by APFD/APFA and CPF.

As CPF has plans to work in Orissa and Jharkhand, it has been felt useful to get the manual translated to English for use by partner NGOs and others in the states. There are also plans to incorporate state-specific components (like in AP) and publish regional versions (Oriya and Hindi) in future.

We gratefully acknowledge the support provided by APFD/APFA in developing and publishing the Telugu version.

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1. INTRODUCTION

We are all well aware that the Government Orders would alone not suffice to ensure the betterment of women's representation and their empowerment. The reasons are multiple. The social and cultural values practiced and deep rooted conventional pattern of thinking adopted by men and women are on one side and popular miscomprehensions about women empowerment which conclude that 'men lose their significance and family institution weakens' on the other,

However, it is unfair to conclude that all men would take it for granted that 'identity assertion by women is a danger signal for their existence'. We must also understand that aspiration of all women to gain individual identity as humans and citizens is still in budding stage. In this backdrop, it has been identified that women empowerment is not confined to women alone and that a serious deal of thought and effort are needed from both men and women.

In such a complex social scenario, this module has been prepared for the training program intended to augment the role of women in *Participatory Forest Management being implemented in the remote villages. Every care has been taken to make it as much simple and precise as possible so that it would be comfortable and useful for the facilitators who promote the concepts and awareness levels in the minds of the VSS members. We are sure that this module would be useful for the VSS members during their post-training periods. By glancing through the module, they could brush up their knowledge and share with their peers.

The most important requisite is a 'sensitive' or a 'responsive' mindset. We believe that there prevails some amount of gender sensitivity among most of us towards the problems encountered by women specifically owing to the inequalities practiced by the society and this book has been prepared with a view that the said gender sensitivity should be developed according to the program. This would also be helpful in changing our mindset and actions, the only way left for us.

^{*} Participatory Forest Management (PFM) and Community Forest Management (CFM) are used synonymously in this manual.

2. UNDERSTANDING 'Gender'

2.1 About 'Gender'

The efforts of national and international women movements for women empowerment and equality have been influencing the policies and programs of the Governments at national and international levels. It has been agreed that there need be a change in the mindset and thinking on par with the changing times and experiences. It has also been unanimously felt that an all-equal socialist society could not be materialized unless we strive to bring about a sea change both in men and women rather than aiming at sensitizing women alone on women empowerment. Now, the term 'Cender' found a firm place in the parlance of development.

In the common usage 'gender' stands for the difference between man and woman. However, in development jargon gender denotes a concept. It could be put as "gender is a social construct i.e. the difference between men and women and the consequent inequalities are fabricated by the society". As per the nature, there is no difference between man and woman except in respect of reproductive process.

The gender concept goes to say that men and women are first humans and they shall play an equally important role as citizens in strengthening the human societies and building up the nations as well. In order to reach this goal, there should be gender equity in all aspects and there should be a total change in the thinking patterns of men and women both, the concept further explains.

Before delving deep into this subject, it is essential to learn about the women movements and Government interventions which made a positive contribution to gender consciousness in India.

2.2 Women movements

A study of the historical backdrop of Indian women movements would reveal that it is enriched by many an innovative ways and means. Though there is a vast difference across the areas, founders, crusaders, concerns fought for and methods adopted, the sole basis for all is equality of men and women.

Right from the Indian independence movement era (1920s), women movements under different parties' leaderships and those emerged independently outside the parties' arena have been endeavoring in different areas at different levels in different ways for safeguarding the women's rights.

The contribution of warner's protested in India can be broadly explained as tollows.

- Emering a work range of rights for entroise.
- String in implementing the resting rights.
- Exposure, the pollutions the last and deficiencies in implementation processes through wealysts and studies and understantly for nemeater.
- Dobing the some and money ageg steer to fight up their own for their cights.
- Physiological assessment in policy an anaphyment, health and education actions.

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The women movements adopted all the three strategies.

The assessment from the countless experiences and efforts since long is that it is the most difficult exercise to achieve equality between men and women as patriarchy and caste system are deep rooted in the society and we are trying to bring about a change in the same. However, it is not impossible. Yes. It is a time consuming process and not an impossible task to realize. There are several testimonies and examples in support of this conviction. For sure, we can declare that women's movements could prevail upon the Government and Government policies. This is justified in the subsequent topics of this book.

Government policies 2.3

Women in large number responded to the call given by Mahatma Gandhi and participated in the independence struggle. The significant role of women in Salt Satyagraha convinced the then National Congress Leaders to seriously think about and work for equal rights for women. During Karachi conference in 1931 a resolution on fundamental rights was passed. The resolution accepted the proposal that men and women should have equal rights in all areas. Resultantly, this ideal was incorporated in the Constitution after independence. The National Congress Party that set up the National Planning Committee during 1939-40 had also set up a Sub Committee for recommendations on women's status. The following are the recommendations of the Sub Committee:

- ★ To recognize the monetary value of domestic work.
- ★ To confer rights on housewives to have total control over some part of their spouses' earnings.
- ★ Men should also be entrusted with some of domestic work.
- Women need to be considered as persons with individual existence and not merely as part of family.

During the post independence era, various 5 year Plans provided for different programs and schemes for women.

I Plan: Women were specially mentioned in 'welfare' programs. The role of the Government was supporter for voluntary organizations.

II Plan: Care of women was entrusted to Central Social Welfare Council. Women's concerns were raised in health aspect, particularly in issues relating to Family Planning.

III Plan: During this Plan period, the number of Nurses and ANMs was considerably augmented.

IV Plan: Concerns of girl children gained special attention in this Plan. But the need to create employment opportunities for women with justified wage for the work done, to conduct studies on the problems faced by the women and to know the causes that resist change in the conditions and finally to improve the productivity from women was yet to be addressed.

V Plan: This Plan did a lot for women. Serious efforts of women movements and declaration of 1975-85 as International Women's Decade – all this influenced the V Plan.

VI Plan: A special chapter was devoted in this Plan to discuss women's concerns. Owing to active role of women's movement, certain important developments took place. The most worth mentioning is publication of data on the conditions of women in the Plan document. Income generating activities have been sponsored considerably. However, a comprehensive planning was yet to be done by opening new wings for grounding the programs exclusively meant for women and to arrest/eliminate the discrimination against women.

Women's movement during the entire decade of 1980s had put efforts to influence the Government's policies. It was strongly felt by the movements that a change in

Government's policies would give expeditious results. Though desired results couldn't be achieved, there was some development.

In 1987, the Government appointed a National Commission for women working in self-employed informal sector.

In 1990, 'National Women Commission Act' was passed. Basing on this Act 'National Women Commission' was set up in 1992. The objectives of this organization are as follows:

- ★ Review the protective measures provided legislatively and legally.
- ★ Propose necessary legal amendments.
- Expedite settlement of complaints.
- ★ Advise the Government on all policy issues relating to women.

The economic reforms launched in 1991 augured several developments.

Under Andhra Pradesh Women Commission Act, 1998, "Andhra Pradesh Women Commission was set up in June, 1999. This Commission strives for improving the conditions of women from all the perspectives.

2.4 Present condition

- Women are united through a nationwide thrift movement and income generation activities.
- Membership for women in watershed and joint forest management and a limited decision making power.
- * 33% reservations for women in Panchayats.

Thus with the opportunities provided by the Government and with the support provided by voluntary organizations and leaders of movements, women could acquire leadership qualities and demonstrated their preparedness to fight in unity against the issues confronting them. Movement for total prohibition of liquor in Andhra Pradesh and Chipco movement in Uttaranchal can be said as examples for unity among women.

However, there is a need for women to come together more with men in the institutions/activities like PRIs, watershed, joint forest management etc and ensure their ideas and decisions prevail in practice.

There is lot of difference between women discussing among themselves in their own women group and discussing with men while influencing the decisions according to their own needs. The preparedness of women to come forward and acceptance of men for the women to come forward is not up to the mark.



2.5 Future agenda - gender mainstreaming:

From the above two things are clear:

- (i) That bringing about a change in the society and that women can go forth to take share in all discussions and take decisions on their own is possible, and
- (ii) That woman cannot move with equal ease and comfort with men group as they could do in their own women group.

In the circumstances, some resort to conclude that women are not actively taking share in Panchayat, joint forest management and watershed programs due to their apathy. But, this is not a fact. It was due to the inherent prevailing inequalities that a congenial environment for women to involve in such programs is lacking. Making efforts to create such an environment is 'gender mainstreaming'. This is the immediate objective for all.

The inequalities that prevail between men and women are not confined to family alone, but encompass the entire society. So, it is necessary to change the perspectives in men and women to mitigate the inequalities and form an all-equal socialist set up. It is

to be admitted that some men surrender to the pressures caused by traditional concepts, values and taboos. But, since the victims of discrimination are naturally women, all the discussions are conducted from women point of view. Women empowerment means questioning the superiority of men. However, it has to be understood that questioning the inequalities and the superiority of man in the family relations, social relations and man and woman relations does not aim at annihilating the family institution, but to establish a friendly atmosphere between men and women in family and society where both could move with mutual respect, equal dignity and status. It has also to be understood that this can not be achieved overnight and lot of efforts have to be made to go in that direction periodically reviewing the conditions and making adjustments.

During 1990s, two vital programs relating to natural resources have been initiated countrywide. One being the watershed and the second one is joint forest management. Both these programs provided for the participatory role of women. Participation does not mean work and take the wages, but getting encouragement to discuss and decide as to how and when the works are to be carried out. Crossing family borders, sharing the ideas at community level with men and participating in discussions is all a new experience for women. Taking share in managing natural resources is also a new exposure for women. To access new areas and achieve progress, support and encouragement of men is imperative in many ways.

Here crops up a dilemma. A question arises - what if the status quo is allowed to continue? Inherent indifference towards 'change' and apathy for special drives create hurdles. Bringing out changes in mindsets and perspectives and suitably adjusting



the behaviors and communications in and outside the families naturally cause discomfiture and inconvenience.

Shunning all sorts of aforementioned embarrassment, apathy and inhibition, a representative group from each village comprising of both women and men, who are fired with ambition to be part in formation of new society could do wonders. Such people would leave their mark on others and bring them into their fold. However, always there is scope for conservatives who vehemently oppose new ideas and to overwhelming the impediments caused by such people is the task ahead for all who dream for a society with progressive thoughts. Towards this end, leaders should acquire the required mental strength.

2.6 Sensitivity and sensitization

Let us look into the meaning of these two terms. "Sensitivity means to respond" and "sensitization means to make others to respond". Irrespective of our ability to comprehend and communicate new ideas, we need to conduct a self-introspection and check ourselves as to whether they really work in us and cause a genuine change in our behavior, thinking and habits. The ideas need to be imbibed in rather than discussed in intellectual fashion. This is necessary to be sensitive to new ideas. Once this kind of sensitivity is integrated into one's character, attitudes change automatically. Renowned Telugu writer Mr. Kodavatiganti Kultumba Rao has rightly put it - "if you lack a heart sensitive to others' woes, you may understand their wails as a performance."

So, choosing ways and means to sensitize the people towards gender concerns is a crucial factor. Majority of the masses do not take 'gender sensitization' to their hearts. They feel it a time waste process as they do not see any worth in it directly and ultimately turn a blind eye on it. The demeanor in response to the proposal on gender equity is common. This is not exclusive to men. Women also wonder about its worth.

In the absence of a wholehearted conviction, it is not possible to bring about a change in the habits or attempt to do it in others. Once convinced about worth of any thing, it is not a Herculean task to reach the related goal. We could find several examples on this in our lives from women point of view as well as men. So, now what is to be done? First we have to identify the core issues in the process-

Though one has no objection to switch on to a new system (welcoming the changes), it is natural to have certain stumbling blocks to take to new processes. This is applicable to gender concerns also irrespective of the fact that whether it is a man or woman.

- ★ When there is no clarity about final objective or if it is not appreciated correctly, there is every possibility for diversions.
- ★ The response of all members of society to a certain issue cannot be in unison. Basing on the level of response, the volume of efforts for changing the perspectives and habits to be put in varies from person to person.
- ★ There is always room in the society for those who are stubbornly averse to a change or hate the proactive people.

It is better to understand that gender sensitization is a slow process. Those who support the cause should demonstrate enough sincerity, patience and tolerance during training program and subsequent field exposure.

Misconceptions: The following misconceptions are spun around the terms 'gender' and 'gender sensitization'.



- 1. 'Gender' pertains to women and it is too exclusive to women only.
- 2. Only the 'males' need to be sensitized and a change brought about in males only.
- 3. Only 'females' need to be categorically explained of gender concerns.
- Only women should speak about gender concerns.
- Gender awareness would destroy the family institution.

It has to be reaffirmed that the above are simply false notions and that it is possible to establish a society on equity basis if both men and women think together and men extend their unconditional support for the same. The prescribed exercise meant for sensitizing the trainees about the inequalities and the resultant anguish of women and also make them appreciate the need to address the gap is furnished in 4th Chapter.

3. FOREST RESOURCES - WOMEN

Backdrop 3.1

Since collection of firewood, drinking water and fodder is allotted to women according to the conventional roles played by men and women, decline in natural resources is a major concern for women. As a result of decline in natural resources, distance to be covered and time to be spent for collection of forest produce increases. Thus the women are forced to toil more. Thanks to the women researchers who revealed vast data related to this issue. On the basis of the said data made available by the women researchers, it has been made possible to negotiate with the rulers and ensure formulation women friendly policies. Consequently, the Government has taken up -

- Development of barren lands a.
- Protecting forests b.
- Creation of people's rights over natural resources

The Government has also provided for partnership of women in management and control of the same. At Central Government level, the role of women has been clearly defined in the programs like Social Forest Management (barren lands development) program) and Joint Forest Management.

Joint Forest Management - Women 3.2

For the first time, the National Forest Policy - 1988 stressed the need of partnering with the communities, with particular reference to women, in managing the forest resources. As part of implementing this policy, in 1990 the Central Environment and Forests Ministry issued instructions to all the State Governments and Union Territories to undertake the process of involving the communities in forest management, which is known as 'Joint Forest Management'. Since 1990, several States issued orders conducive to Joint Forest Management Program.

However, the variation in perspectives adopted by different States in attaching to women the importance and magnitude is obvious from the orders they issued. Knowing these details would facilitate better comprehension of related issues and hence mentioned here.

Formation of Vana Samrakshana Samithi is important for Joint Forest Management. General Body and Management Committee play pivotal role in the process. Vana Samrakshana Samithi is given different names in different States. However, General Body and Managing Committee are common everywhere. Now, let's examine as to what has been mentioned about women's role with regard to General Body and Managing Committee.

General Body: Except in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan and Tamilnadu, no number was prescribed about the membership of women. Even among these States, while Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab and Tamilnadu prescribed 50% of women in the General Body, it was different in respect of other States.

Managing Committee: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland and West Bengal made no special mention about representation of women in the Managing Committee.

While Andhra Pradesh Tamil Nadu and Karanataka insisted on 50% representation of women, many other States allotted for women only 1/3rd share. Representation of women is confined to a mere two in Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh States.

4. COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT Gender Mainstreaming

- 4.1 Points specially mentioned in the G.O. on Community Forest Management of Andhra Pradesh
- Two adult members (one must be woman) from each household shall have membership in the General Body.
- Eight members out of the 15 in the Managing Committee shall be women.
- Provision for dual leadership viz. Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.
- Both the above two positions and at least one woman shall hold one.
- Both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be the signatories for the two
 accounts held by the VSS. In addition to the signatures of these two, signature
 of one of the Forest Department personnel would also be there for Government
 account.

4.2 Points to be checked (in implementation)

- (i) How the rule relating to representation of two adult persons (one must be woman) from each household in the General Body is being observed? It has also to be checked whether the single women are included or not?
- (ii) Is there a minimum of 8 or more women members? If so, whether they are proposed by others or elected? On which priority basis they are selected and to what age group they belong? Are they aware of the responsibilities of members of Managing Committees? How capable are they in sharing with others of their experiences in the trainings they underwent? How regular they are in attending the meetings and how effective they are in raising voice on behalf of womenfolk? Do they get enough domestic support for their enthusiasm or are they forced to fight with their family members? All these aspects are to be checked. It has also to be checked whether there are any other problems hovering over them. It is most important to bear in mind that if the above aspects are given due importance while selecting the women members, subsequent process would be much easier and the objective achieved. If some of women come forward and stay in the forefront for some period, the rest would follow the suit. As such, it would be a futile exercise to make those who

- are disinterested as members. In such cases, the indifferent members couldn't justify their roles and might be proved to be 'cause factors' for others to lose interest.
- (iii) Signing the cheques and matters relating to Accounts. Whether the two accounts to be opened for VSS are opened or not? Whether the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson are signing the cheques in consultation with each other? Whether they act together in accordance with the decisions of the Managing Committee? Whether they are making any efforts for depositing of money into the 2nd VSS Account? What is the procedure adopted in running these accounts? All these aspects have to be checked and proper procedure ensured.
- (iv) Works and wages: The following aspects are to be checked.
- ★ Who decides about works?
- ★ How a decision is taken on as to who should work?
- ★ What is the wage disbursement process?
- What is the method adopted in allotment of work and payment of wages to the poorest of the poor and single and physically challenged women?

(v) Participating in training programs

As mentioned earlier, shouldering management of natural resources, particularly forest resources, and sharing the ideas with males while prevailing upon them to take decisions in women's favor are new experiences for women. As such, it is more important for women to participate in the training programs. Training need not necessarily is so in strict sense. Assessment of progress from previous stage and related discussions are also part of training. In their own interests, women need to be active in observing and understanding every issue concerned to them and get their doubts clarified.

Woman needs to develop her skills in respect of the following aspects:

- (i) She should be able to attentively listen and thoroughly understand any matter she comes across afresh.
- (ii) She must endeavor to translate it into practice and get her doubts that may arise in the course clarified.
- (iii) In the course of her experience, she should improve her skills of communication with fellow womenfolk, men in VSS and Forest Department personnel.

- She should extend her gamut of thinking beyond her family to the rest of the (50)
- She should aim at peacefully resolving any disputes she may have with others. (W)
- She should personally observe each member of VSS and submit to the Forest Department suggesting assignment of responsibilities to each of the members (4.17) keeping in view their potentials.

Thus there is lot of scope to refine and improve her capabilities. However, it is noticed that many women exhibit disinterest when they are asked to go to far off places for training. They might have their own reasons, which they feel justified. This aspect has been discussed somewhere else in this module. However, it is to be kept in mind that when women members actually need to go to other places they shouldn't avoid it. They should proceed and it is the responsibility of others and family members should encourage them to go ahead with their scheduled training program for the following reasons.

- To gain experience in traveling to new places. (m)
- To avail the opportunity to access the inputs provided by other resource persons (m) and share their own experiences with others.
- An interaction with their counterparts from other districts would instill (100) confidence and boost up their spirits for being part of a statewide program.
- Complete reliefs from domestic chores for two or three days would make them (3K) mentally refresh.
- Participation in training program takes self-confidence to new heights. (4)
- As the days pass by, the family members will get used to her absence for limited (11) periods and do the things on their own without expecting help from her.

Problems faced - measures to overcome

The problems faced by the women in taking active participation in the program and the steps to over come the same as evaluated from different trainings involving women are given below. After completing the presentation relating to group discussion as explained in 4th Chapter, the Resource Person may refer to the contents of the under mentioned table and initiate a discussion analytically.

S.No.	Problem	Measure to be taken
1.	Except about their association with VSS, women are ignorant of other things.	Women should be apprised of all the related issues outside the VSS.
2.	Unaware of being members of Committee	It is mandatory that all the members should be gathered together and apprised of their roles and responsibilities as members. This should be reiterated twice or thrice at least.
3.	Women have no information about meetings	This is to be taken care of specially and meetings should be arranged according to the convenience of women.
4.	Women are made members against their willingness	This could be settled by counseling them, and, if still they persist, they must be advised to tender resignation. New willing members need to be elected afresh.
5.	Though women are interested, family members do not support	l i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i
6.	Family members claim no objection, but raise concerns about domestic work	The members should counsel them. Such issues need to be discussed thoroughly in the General Body and the family members should be made to understand the need for providing relief for women from domestic chores.
7.	Lack of material knowledge in women limits their participation	All measures need to be taken up to provide material knowledge for women. One or two members should take special care in this regard. Women should be made to understand that training programs and meetings would definitely help their knowledge improve. In every meeting, women should be especially encouraged to express themselves.
8.	Fellow womenfolk discourages and heckles	This should be totally avoided. A restrained environment encourages one and all to express themselves and learn from others.

S.No.	Problem	Measure to be taken
9.	Men do not heed to the advices of women and so women are	Initially, women members need to consult each other and hold a pilot discussion and they should entrust the job to a member who could effectively articulate their viewpoints. Such person should be supported during the meeting. If men are still negative, an adjournment of the issue to the next meeting may be sought for. Under no circumstances, women need to succumb to the pressures and concede. Men should also refine themselves by heeding to and supporting the women. If there is anything to be objected genuinely in the suggestions of women, they should be sensitized on that rather than losing temper.
10.	Family members do not allow women to proceed to other places for trainings	A companion is to be arranged in such cases.
11.	Participating in the meetings on par and sharing with men and traveling along with them is a taboo and it may cast a slur on their character and chastity.	To suspect characters is a sick psychology and it has got nothing to do with traditions. It is a very wrongful idea to take mask of traditions for hiding insane mindsets. This should be exposed outright. Traditions need not be undermined.
12.	Everyone nags active women, who take share in trainings and meetings that they don't love their children and care not their husbands etc.	Body meetings. It should be explained that such comments are uncivilized. It should also
13.	Men, particularly husbands, are also humiliated for encouraging their women.	
14.	Many people disapprove is women do not observe the limits of conversation with mer for learning new items.	should be healthy friendly relations between



Measures that help increase the role of women

- Conducting meetings
- Encouragement should be given to Chairperson and Vice Chairperson to undertake equal responsibilities in conduct of meeting. Forest Department and NGO/CEW should facilitate such environment. It should be ensured that the presence of women in all meetings (GB and MC) is not less than 50%. Representation from all communities is to be ensured.
- It is to be examined whether there are any special items to be incorporated in agenda on behalf of women.
- After discussion on each item of agenda, the viewpoints of women should be recorded compulsorily.
- It has to be clearly mentioned at whose behest the decisions are made i.e. whether it is at the behest of all members or majority of men or majority of

2. Managing Bank Accounts

The woman signatory to the bank account should sign/impress LTI, while withdrawing the money, only after thoroughly convincing herself of all the details.

The bank pass book and cheque book should be retained with themselves and it should be shown and explained to the women of all communities.

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- THE PURSUE IN THE THE WINDOWS

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5. TRAINING PROGRAM PLAN - METHOD OF TRAINING

Members: VSS members 30

(ii) Duration : Two days

PROGRAM DETAILS

Day 1 -

Morning:

Introduction – organizers and participants

Purpose of training program – Organizers

Group discussion 1 : Participants, facilitators

Presentations : Participants, facilitators

Afternoon:

Summing up presentations : Resource Person

 Enlightening on the chapter : Resource Person 'Understanding the Gender concept'

Forest Resources-women : Resource Person

Day 2 -

Morning:

- Issues relating to women in Participatory Forest Management: Resource Person
- Group Discussion 2: The viewpoints of men and women on the conditions existing in their respective VSSs.
- Group presentations
- Summing up and items to be kept in observed

Afternoon:

- What are the obstacles presently the women are facing? Resource Person should elicit from the members and facilitate.
- How to overcome the obstacles? Resource Person should elicit from the members and facilitate.

ABOUT GROUP DISCUSSIONS

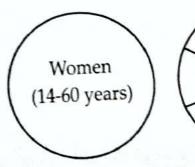
Group Discussion 1: The members should be divided into two or three groups and they should be assigned with the following items for discussion. In every group, there should be one facilitator and another who could pen down the proceedings of group discussion.

In the present social scenario, women are not comfortable. Options for women to come Objective: up as individuals and citizens are very meager, which makes the life of future generations miserable. The members should be able to comprehend this and their sensitivity further sharpened.

Items for Group Discussion:

- How many families are there in your village or under your VSSs (approximately)? (Those who come from VSS could explain about their hamlet or street. It is 1. sufficient if they could mention about 50 to 100 households)
- Supposing there are 100 women from all houses, what is the percentage of women in the age group 14 - 60 belonging to following categories? 2.
- Women married and leading a happy and harmonious life. a.
- Unmarried women b.
- Those who failed in married life
- Those who are over aged to get married (owing to over age or determined not c. d. to get married)
- Widower with / without children e.
- Those who has a strained relationship with spouse though living together f.
- Others g.

After Group presentations, the facilitators should sum up as follows:

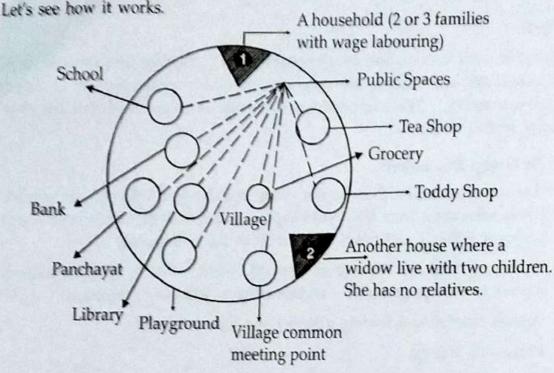




The women belonging to A & B categories do not have any visible problems.

As per our knowledge, barring 30% to 40% women, the rest come under c, d, e and f categories. It is a fact that 60% to 70% women are subjected to different sufferings.

The reasons for women's misery could be attributed directly to the harassment of men on some occasions and on the other occasions to the commands of patriarchal set up.



In the house No.1, there is a severe fight between man and woman. It should be elicited from the members about the condition of man and woman of that household, how they spend their time and what are their opportunities etc.

In the house No.2, it should be elicited how the widow, who doesn't have any relatives, is living with her children. It should also be elicited how she is dependent on others for getting her things done outside her house.

The following can be the general findings:

- Usually men are engaged in many ways. He need not linger in his house and get fixed to domestic tensions. He can release his tensions in many ways.
- Women have no such chances. Moreover, the treatment of relatives and friends usually agonize her further.

It is high time for all of us to think it over as to whether such conditions should go forever unchecked. Should we remain as feeble spectators? Are we really totally devoid of sensitivity to react?

Group Discussion 2: All the men and women should be separated into two groups (depending on the number, the groups can be divided into more). Each group should comprise of 10 members. One facilitator and a report writer should also be identified. If all the members of group are illiterates, an outsider should be arranged to record the proceedings.

Objective:

To review the role of women in VSSs and to chalk out the future program.

Items to be discussed:

- (i) How the aspects specially earmarked for women in Participatory Forest Management are being implemented in their VSSs?
- (ii) What is the role of women in other management issues like protecting the forest, disbursement of profits etc?
- (iii) What are the obstacles in the way of women?
- (iv) How to overcome?

After group discussions and presentations, if there are striking differences, it could be understood as difference in the perspectives of men and women. Resource person can avail the suggestions given in the pre-page according to the situation.

Everyone should speak out only from their experiences and about their respective village.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS BY CPF

Training Manuals:

- 1. Participatory Forest Management Vol-1 (Facilitation Skills)
- 2. Participatory Forest Management Vol-2 (Conflict Resolution)

Others:

- 1. Stakeholder consultations on Community Forest Management, 2001
- 2. Forest Biodiversity Registers, 2002
- 3. Study on VSS Sustainability and the role of GCC (NTFP marketing) in connection with CFM in Andhra Pradesh, ISBN: 978-81-905419-0-9, 2003
- Bamboo in VSSs of Andhra Pradesh (Harvest, Marketing & Benefit Sharing), ISBN: 978-81-905419-1-6, 2003
- Proceedings of the National Conference on Dalit Concerns in Forestry, ISBN: 978-81-905419-2-3, 2004
- 6. Monitoring by Stakeholders, ISBN: 978-81-905419-3-0, 2005
- Community Forestry Micro-plan Training manual for Facilitators, ISBN: 978-81-905419-4-7, 2005
- Training manual on Gender Mainstreaming (Telugu), ISBN: 978-81-905419-5-4, 2005
- 9. Training manual on Conflict Resolution (Telugu), ISBN: 978-81-905419-6-1, 2005
- 10. Training manual on Facilitation Skills to Community Extension Workers (CEWs) (Telugu), ISBN: 978-81-905419-7-8, 2005
- 11. National Consultation with Civil Society Organisation on Non-Timber Forest Produce Policy and Management, 2005
- 12. Biodiversity Register Process (Telugu), ISBN: 978-81-905419-8-5, 2005
- 13. Consultation on Intervention of CPF in Orissa, 2007
- 14. Connective lives: Five years in people's forestry, 2007

We believe that the claim to conservation, control and management of forest resources belong to the forest dependent/dwelling communities and their livelihood should be the primary concern of all forestry programmes. Written and designed by: Center for People's Forestry (for Private disculation only)