Indigenous Women, Climate Change and REDD+

Khasur Village, Banjhakhet VDC, Ward No-1, Lamjung District
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Food Security

Indigenous Knowledge and Skills, and Food Security:

- About 64% of indigenous women work in agriculture
- **Traditional Responsibility**: Collecting seeds, weeding and harvesting
- In Moist place: Indigenous barley seeds called *laate*
- In Warmer place: *larfaree and dalle*
- Increasing migrating for earning
- 42% of women prepare organic manure-dung, kitchen waste, agricultural residue and fodder from the forest
- Staple food: Paddy, Barley, wheat, maize
- More than 50% consumption is met by their production
- Food from forests:
  - **Wild Vegetable**: Sisnu, Taamaa, Niuro, Kurilo, Bhyakur, Gittha
  - **Nuts, berries and spices**: (Katush, Asiselu, Daalchini, Timur)
Food Security

Adaptive Strategies Adopted by Indigenous Women in Climate Change Scenario

- Irregular rainfall pattern - Declining food production
- New grasses seen - More time for weeding
- Started to plant new species of rice that need less amount of water - Aryan, Makwanpur
- Started to use improved seeds of maize for fast and higher production
- Water their fields by collecting running water during rainy season through small canals
Food Security

Adaptive Strategies Adopted by Indigenous Women in Climate Change Scenario

- Utsahi Krishak Samuha (Energetic Farmers Group):
  - 13 Women and 7 Men
  - Vegetables (Cabbage, Tomato, Chilly, Lady’s finger, Cauliflower) are grown inside the plastic tunnel-Plastic tunnel protects vegetable from unseasonal and heavy rains
Sustainable Forest Management and Governance

Indigenous Women and Community Forestry

- Women depend more on forest: Primarily responsible for cooking, feeding livestock and preparing compost manure

Traditional Forest Management Practice

- **Riti Badhne System**: Exercised through the council of village leaders
- **Udhauli**: Herders bring their animal to lower area during winter season
- **Ubhauli**: Going up in the high area during summer season
- Worship forest god, **Shime Bhume** during **Ubhauli**
- Traditionally, the participation of women isn’t safeguarded in the decision of law related to forest resource and society
- Spiritual sites: **Kanyathan, Devithan, Bhuwanithan**
Sustainable Forest Management and Governance

Khasur Community Forest

- 337 hectares; 182 households rely on forest
- Members of users group- 510 women and 539 men
- Forest area is divided into 8 subgroups for effective and efficient management and benefit sharing of the forest
- Users committee of 21 members is formed in every 5 years
Sustainable Forest Management and Governance

- Indigenous women possess traditional knowledge regarding the medicinal value of some plants found in the forest and they have been preserving so long.
- More men migrating to cities for work—More women participation is increasing in the forest management
- **Pragati Naari Samuha** (Progressive Women’s Group)—Undertaken the task of guarding the forest whenever it’s necessary
  - Forest Fire during summer season
  - Possible illegal activities in the forest
Women Security

Gender based Inequalities and the impact of climate change

- Patriarchal social structure – contributes to the vulnerability of indigenous women
- Indigenous women who have direct relation with nature and natural resources are affected the most by the impacts of climate change
- Production declined due to the impacts of climate change. So indigenous women of Kalleri village have started to work as labor in the city area.
- Every day they walk about one and half hours to reach the city area to find work.
- Indigenous women do not have access to education and information
Land Tenure and Security

Secure Land Tenure and Sustainability of Resources, Traditional Roles and Empowerment of Indigenous Women

• The nationalization of forest area deprived indigenous peoples from their rights to manage and get benefit from the forests.
• This contributed to the heavy deforestation of the forest as the people started loosing their stewardship towards their forests.
• Indigenous women-Limited rights to land, the ownership of the land is on the hands of male member of the family.
• A daughter is not entitled to her paternal property, simply because once married her status will change.
Land Tenure and Security

Secure Land Tenure and Sustainability of Resources, Traditional Roles and Empowerment of Indigenous Women

• Mangali Bhujel (43 years) is compelled to become a labor to sustain herself and a 8 years old daughter as her husband married with another women and stopped sending the money from India.

• All the properties, land, house are still in her husband’s name. So she has no option to choose except to work as a labor.
Land Tenure and Security

Therefore to empower indigenous women land ownership and secured tenure is essential.

- It is necessary to address power differences between men and women, and improve women’s access to decision making.
Energy

Indigenous Women and Sustainable use of Energy

- In Nepal, most energy comes from forest-collecting and managing this fuel for household is strictly women’s job.
- About 52% households of Khasur have started using improved wood burning stoves because:
  - It needs less amount of wood
  - It emits less smoke
Energy

- The users of Gobar Gas are quite low as they use dung for manure production.
- Due to the use of improved wood burning stoves, the frequency of going to forest for firewood has reduced.
- As a mitigation initiative to the climate change through reducing the utility of firewood, the indigenous women are playing vital role through the adoption of sustainable energy generation.
Conclusion

- Indigenous peoples’ of Khasur Village has already started experiencing the impacts of climate change.
- Indigenous women have been developing various adaptation and mitigation strategies against the ongoing climate change.
- However, it seems necessary to explore whether the adaptation strategies adopted by these indigenous women are sufficient or not and what more can be done to strengthen these strategies.
- Indigenous women are the one who constantly work hard for the survival of her family and community with her eco-friendly hands but they are one to become the severe victim of climate change.
- As women, as an indigenous peoples and as indigenous women they are facing discriminations in their society and out of their society.
Recommendation

- Enhance women’s adaptive capacities and livelihoods including alternative agricultural practices, access to credit, inputs such as improved seed varieties, as well as supported and promoted.
- Increase access to education, health services, food security and improve the overall situation of indigenous women.
- Participation and representation of indigenous women in decision making must be secured.
- The contribution made by indigenous women to forest conservation must be acknowledged and they must be empowered to participate actively in planning and decision making in community forestry programmes.
- Enable indigenous women to participate actively in decision making within climate change policy making at different levels in terms of mitigation and adaptation.
- Carry further research to explore the impact of climate change on indigenous women and the adaptation and mitigation strategies taken by them.
Thank You!!!
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