



Gender, Poverty and Social Equity Mainstreaming in MSFP

- achievements, learnings and the way forward

THE MULTI STAKEHOLDER FORESTRY PROGRAMME
KATHMANDU
JULY 2016

Published by the Multi Stakeholder Forestry Programme (MSFP)

Published by:

Multi Stakeholder Forestry Programme (MSFP)

A Programme of the Government of Nepal supported by the Governments of Finland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

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Abbreviations

AFEC	Agriculture, Forest and Environment Committee
CF	Community Forest/ Forestry
CFUG	Community Forest Users Group
DAG	Disadvantaged Group
DDC	District Development Committee
DFCC	District Forests Coordination Committee
DFO	District Forest Office/ Officer
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GO	Governmental Organization
GoN	Government of Nepal
GPSE	Gender Poverty and Social Equity
HH	Household
IGA	Income Generating Activity
LFG	Local Forestry Group
LFP	Livelihoods and Forestry Programme
LHFP	Leasehold Forestry Programme
LIPOs	Local Implementing Partner Organizations
NGO IA	Non- Government Implementing Agencies
NSCFP	Nepal Swiss Community Forestry Programme
MoFSC	Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation
MoWCSW	Ministry of Women Children and Social Welfare
MoFALD	Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
OMS	Outcome Monitoring Summary
PCO	Program Coordination Office
SFM	Scientific Forest Management

EXECUTIVE SUMMERY

This reflection and learning paper focuses on documenting the mainstreaming process of Gender, Poverty and Social Equity (GPSE) within the Multi Stakeholder Forestry Programme (MSFP), as well as the approaches, the achievements, and the way forward at the policy, institutional and the beneficiary level. GPSE as a specific programme intervention under outcome 3 is covered in a separate document, “The Livelihood Improvement Programme of MSFP; achievements, learnings and the way forward”.

The MSFP has adopted a two pronged strategy for GPSE mainstreaming - firstly, targeting women, the poor and the disadvantaged through a specific programme component under outcome 3, and integrating this approach into the other Programme outcomes – policy and governance, the investment of the private sector in job creation, climate change and forest management.

Secondly, GPSE as a cross cutting theme is mainstreamed at 3 levels – policy at the centre, institutions in the decentralized units of government, and within beneficiary organisations in the field. Six different approaches and tools for this mainstreaming have been used: the operationalization of the forestry sector GSI strategy, the GPSE Conceptual and Operational Framework, gender and DAG targeting and budgeting, gender audits and public audits, GESI and leadership training, and operationalizing internship policy within a promotion of work force diversity.

Key achievements of mainstreaming this GPSE strategy are: assessment and implementation of, and policy feedback from the forest sector GSI strategy; activation and strengthening of the GSI core group at the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC); support to the Programme Coordination Office (PCO) for preparation of the MoFSC GSI code of conduct; and improved workforce diversity across the implementing partners, the SSU and the PCO.

At the beneficiary level following the targeting approach, against a target of 60%, 62% of all total beneficiaries from direct programme interventions across all activities of MSFP are from disadvantaged groups, including women. In terms of job creation, 33% of the 22,478 full time jobs created through forest-based enterprises and sustainable forest management activities have been accessed by women.

Another key achievement at the beneficiary level is increased representation of the marginalized on the Executive Committees of the local forest user groups (LFGs); these levels now stand at women 43%, Dalit 14%, and the disadvantaged 50%.

In leadership positions of the LFGs, 42% of the key positions of either Chair or Secretary are now held by women, 15% by Dalit and 45% by the disadvantaged. This is a significant increase over the 2013 baseline data, 33% for women and 10% for Dalit.

At the institutional level, MSFP has made significant efforts in GPSE mainstreaming by developing its GPSE specific operational framework tools, “how to note” guidelines, a capacity building programme, and placing social mobilizers and dedicated GESI technical experts and officers at the NGO partner implementation agencies (IAs) and at the SSU; these efforts were well appreciated by the Mid-Term review report of MSFP.

GESI transformational change and empowerment of women and other discriminated social groups is a long term process which requires dedicated joint efforts of the GoN and its development partners. A foundation for this has been laid by many programmes and projects, including MSFP, and various good practices exist which can be continued and adapted by future forestry, climate change and rural community development projects.

Sector level institutional capacity strengthening and technical human resource development in GESI is crucial to implement the policy; this requires institutional commitment, time, and specific fund allocations in the MoFSC annual budgets.

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1

BACKGROUND

The Multi Stakeholder Forestry Programme (MSFP) builds on the learnings and good practices of the GoN's Nepal Swiss Community Forestry Programme (NSCFP, SDC) and the Livelihoods and Forestry Programme (LFP, DFID), as well as the Leasehold Forestry Programme (LHFP - the Government of Finland), all which were undertaken in partnership with the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC). All these programmes promoted gender equity and pro-poor livelihood initiatives in relation to the community, leasehold, and public land forestry initiatives, and took a proactive approach to reaching the women, poor and disadvantaged individuals and households.

1.1 Objective and Structure of the Report

MSFP was the largest programme in the forestry sector and implemented from 12 December 2012 to 31 July 2016. The main objective of this paper is to document the learnings of the programme in the area of mainstreaming Gender, Poverty and Social Equity (GPSE) as a cross cutting theme in all MSFP activities. Achievements, good practices and lessons learned from the programme will hopefully contribute to the policy, design and implementation of future forestry and climate change programmes and policies.

GPSE as a specific programme intervention under outcome 3 is covered by a separate paper, entitled "The Livelihood Improvement Programme of MSFP; achievements, learnings and the way forward"

1.2 The MSFP Context

MSFP, under the leadership of the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC), envisioned improved livelihood and resilience for women, poor and disadvantaged people, and is being jointly implemented by state and non-state actors. The latter included civil society Non-Government Organizations

(NGOs), communities and the private sector.

The programme is designed through four outcomes: 1) to strengthen the forest sector policy and governance, 2) to promote the private sector and enterprises, 3) to support rural livelihood and community resilience, and 4) to manage the forests sustainably and reduce climate change vulnerability.

MSFP was implemented in 43 districts – 23 core programme districts, and 20 thematic programme districts – see Figure 1.

Working Districts

Forward-Nepal

Sundar Nepal Sanstha

IA Lot V - Rupantran Nepal

IA Lot IV - LIBIRD

ENPRED-Nepal

IA Lot II - ECARDS-Nepal

IA Lot I - RRN-Nepal

IA Lot III - RIMS-Nepal

Full-fledged Programme Districts (23)

Thematic Programme Districts (20)

Cluster

- Mid/Far Western Cluster
- Mid-Western Cluster
- Western Cluster
- Western Terai Cluster
- Center/Eastern Cluster
- Eastern Cluster

Thematic Programme Districts (20)

- Sustainable Forest Management
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Forest-based Enterprise

MSFP SSU cluster office

MSFP

Activities on Sustainable Forest Management is implemented in some more districts than shown above

Multi Stakeholder Forestry Programme बहुसहकारवाला बन कार्यक्रम

2

GPSE AS A CROSS CUTTING AREA OF INTERVENTION IN MSFP

The MSFP has taken a two pronged strategy for Gender, Poverty and Social Equity (GPSE) mainstreaming. Firstly, targeting women, the poor and the disadvantaged through a specific programme component under outcome 3.

Outcome 3 focuses on livelihood improvement of the target groups and governance strengthening of the local forestry groups (LFGs) so that they became responsible for the empowerment of women and socially excluded groups. As a result, the LFGs are implementing their own internal livelihood improvement programmes, funded using their own funds, and targeting women and the socio-economically disadvantaged households and individuals. The field facilitators of some of the LFGs have been instrumental in allocating up to 35% of the annual income of the LFGs for these livelihood programmes.

The targeting approach was also integrated to the other Programme Outcomes - policy and governance, private sector investment for job creation, climate change and forest management. The Programme target was 60% of all total beneficiaries across MSFP activities should be from disadvantaged groups, including women.

The second strategy was to mainstream GPSE as a cross cutting theme at different levels, such as in policy guidelines, district institutions and within the local level beneficiaries, applying six different approaches and tools of mainstreaming – these are explained in the following sections.

2.1 Overview of the GPSE Mainstreaming Process and Approach

The six different approaches and tools to integrate GPSE dimensions in the Programme are illustrated in Figure 2.



Figure 2: MSFP GPSE mainstreaming process and approach

2.2 Support to implement the MoFSC GESI Vision and Strategy

Providing support to implement the GESI strategy of the MoFSC was one of the key GPSE operational strategies of the MSFP. The MoFSC GESI Strategy (2007) was formulated to strengthen its organizational capacity for mainstreaming women, poor and excluded groups in the forestry sector, and to enhance their involvement in sustainable forest management and forest benefit sharing.

The MoFSC developed the following vision for gender equality and social inclusion:

“The Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation is a gender and social equity sensitive and socially inclusive organization practicing good forest governance to ensure equitable access to, benefits from and decision making power over forest resources of all stakeholders”. (MoFSC 2061/11/8, page 2)

MSFP therefore did not have its own separate GESI strategy, but its outputs and activities are aligned to the extent possible towards the realization of the following four change areas in the forest sector outlined in the MoFSC GESI strategy:

1. Gender and Social Inclusion in policy, rules and regulations, and directives.
2. Equitable governance and GESI responsive institutional development.
3. GESI sensitive budget, programmes, and monitoring.
4. Equitable access to resources, decisions, and benefits.

2.3 GPSE Conceptual And Operational Framework (MSFP)

Taking the MoFSC GESI strategy as a reference, the MSFP developed the GPSE conceptual and operational framework in order to guide the SSU staff and NGO implementing agencies (IAs) on: integrating GPSE perspectives during programme implementation – see left. The framework covers the what, why, and how of GPSE mainstreaming during implementation, with a focus on integrating gender and social inclusion perspectives into the development of programme and research proposal development, including the planning, budgeting and implementation aspects, as well as the monitoring and evaluation process; and at the institutional level, the vacancy announcements and the staff recruitment processes, for example.



2.4 The Fund Flow Analysis - for the targeting, budgeting and tracking of gender and the disadvantaged groups

MSFP has adopted SDC's Fund Flow Analysis (FFA) approach for tracking the recipients of Programme funds – it analyses and monitors the flow of funds towards the receivers and beneficiaries. The analysis has been used consciously for decision making at programme level. The FFA has 3 main dimensions of fund flow monitoring and provides information on:

- fund receivers by geographic region (rural, district, national and global), and from a discrimination perspective (discriminated and non-discriminated groups);
- beneficiaries of funds disbursed, disaggregated by disadvantaged, non-disadvantaged groups and by gender perspective;
- allocation of funds to different geographic working areas.

2.5 Gender Audit and Public Audit

Gender auditing is an approach to self-assess and review the extent of institutionalization of gender equity within programmes, projects, and institutions. It was introduced in 2015 by MSFP to analyse the level of gender equity within the IAs although the approach was not spelled out as a priority approach in the MSFP Programme Document.

Public audit of programme implementation, however, was well reflected in the Programme Document, and was practiced from the beginning of the Programme. Public hearings and public auditing were instrumental for enhancing the transparency of programme support to LFGs, as well as their accountability toward better mobilization of the MSFP support. Monitoring data in 2016 indicated that 80% of the total LFGs supported by the Programme had institutionalized public audits as a mandatory process for any activities they implement.

2.6 Training and Capacity Building

In order to integrate GESI, training and capacity building was necessary for the NGO IAs and partner GoN implementers. As MSFP was a large

programme with multiple implementing partners and service providers with varied capacity and institutional background, GESI orientation was an important area of intervention. The programme also supported orientation on the MoFSC GESI strategy for district and regional level forest authorities and staff. In addition, skills based trainings (e.g. entrepreneurship development) were provided by the IAs in the field; these were targeted to women and members of disadvantaged groups.

2.7 Workforce Diversity and Internship policy

MSFP followed SDC's workforce diversity and internship policies while recruiting staff for the SSU, and this was also undertaken by the NGO partners. The policies aim to promote inclusion of women and discriminated caste and ethnic groups in the workforce, and create internship opportunities for women and members of discriminated social groups from forestry and environmental science graduates.

3

THE MSFP GESI INTERVENTIONS AND INITIATIVES

GESI interventions are taking place at three levels, which are interconnected as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3: MSFP GPSE interventions

3.1 Policy Level Interventions

3.1.1 Assessment of the forestry sector GESI strategy implementation

MSFP provided technical expertise as well as financial support for assessing the implementation of the MoFSC GESI strategy. Through a consultation process, the assessment covered about 500 participants deriving from GoN offices, federations, various networks, bilateral projects, donors, forest user groups, and NGOs. Amongst the GoN institutions, the assessment covered 74 District Forest Offices (DFOs), 5 Regional Forest Directorates, 56 District Soil Conservation Offices, 23 Protected Areas and 5 Plant Research Offices. The key findings from this GESI strategy implementation assessment - see page 10 - were presented to the Forestry Sector Strategy (FSS, 2015) design

team. As a result, the FSS 2015 has included GESI perspectives as one of the 8 strategic pillars of the strategy - promoting gender equality, social inclusion and reducing poverty.

3.1.2 GESI policy brief

The GESI policy brief was based on the analysis of forestry sector policy in the following four key thematic areas:

- o GESI in forest sector governance and poverty policy.
- o GESI in sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation policy.
- o GESI in climate change policy.
- o GESI in private sector engagement, commercialization and employment policy.

This policy brief - see below, right - was also a key background document for effective mainstreaming of GESI in the Forestry Sector Strategy and the Forest Policy, both approved in 2015.



3.1.3 The MoFSC GESI core group

The MoFSC has a GESI thematic working group with members representing the government, civil society and NGOs, donors, programmes and projects. The group is chaired by the Ministry's Chief of Planning and Human Resource Division (Joint Secretary level), and coordinated by the GESI Focal Person (Undersecretary level). The group remained passive to some extent over the past few years, but MSFP's technical backstopping enabled the group to organize an increased number of meetings and activities related to GESI. For example, the MoFSC assigned one GESI focal person to each of the 5 key departments – the Departments of Forest, of Soil Conservation, of Plant Resources, of Wildlife Conservation, and of Research and Survey. Assigning dedicated human resources for coordinating GESI issues and main MoFSC programmes is a very proactive step. The GESI assessment and GESI policy brief, illustrated on page 10, were carried out under the leadership of the MoFSC's GESI Core Group with technical backstopping from the MSFP.

3.2 Institutional and Programme Level Interventions

3.2.1 GPSE operational framework development and orientation

The GESI operational framework (November, 2012) intended to provide conceptual clarity as well as guidance for the technical staff of the Services Support Unit (SSU) and the MSFP implementing partners, both GOs and NGOs.

The framework was developed for the Programme as:

- an institutional strategic tool,
- a capacity building tool, and -
- a process monitoring tool.

The framework also serves as a guideline on how to operationalize GESI policy in the forest sector. The framework and how to use it was included in all orientations and many trainings for the SSU staff, the NGO IAs, the MSFP Programme Coordination Office, and for district level government officials.

3.2.2 GESI residential training to GoN staff

Limited understanding of GESI amongst the GoN staff is a serious capacity gap in the forestry sector. However, following the MSFP initiatives, there is a renewed interest among the staff for sensitization and training on GESI. During the need assessment, women staff at central offices, and men staff at the district level were found to be particularly interested in being provided with further clarity on the GESI concept and tools that can facilitate GESI integration in forest management planning, budgeting and monitoring.

Most of the women staff highlighted a lack of capacity in the MoFSC for GESI-sensitive human resource management and development. They saw the need for capacity building of the administrative staff and decision makers in GESI sensitive staff recruitment, retention, promotion and human resource development (GESI, Need Assessment of MoFSC, 2013). As a result, the MSFP supported the design, organization and facilitation of a GESI residential training for forestry officials. The Western Regional Forest Directorate in Pokhara took the initiative and coordinated the first training with technical and financial support from MSFP. The Eastern Regional Forest Directorate subsequently organized a similar training, also with support from MSFP.

3.2.3 Gender audit framework and gender auditing of local partners

The MSFP also supported the development of a gender audit framework and conducted a gender audit of the local implementing partner organizations in the districts (the LIPOs). As one of the capacity building tools, the framework was developed and orientated for implementing agencies with the technical support of Samuhik Abhiyan, an NGO, and the Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC).

3.2.4 Leadership, gender and governance training to IAs, LIPOs and users group

During the cost extension phase of the Programme (27 March 2014 to 15 July 2016), a special component for women's leadership development training was included by the IA NGOs in their work plans. Mentoring guidelines were developed and on-site coaching undertaken for the front line field staff of the IAs and LIPOs. How to do guideline *How to Notes* were developed by the SSU

thematic managers to guide the IAs, LIPOs and DFO staff on the application of the GESI approach in the key thematic areas of MSFP – in the livelihood and enterprise components, in the area of leadership, in good governance and social mobilization practices, and in sustainable forest management and climate change.

3.2.5 Annual workforce diversity survey and recruiting Interns

MSFP participated in the annual workforce diversity survey conducted by SDC for identifying under represented groups, and applied positive discrimination in recruitment to ensure a more equitable staffing structure. Both the NGO and GO implementing agencies were regularly orientated on workforce diversity principles and its operationalization at the field level. MSFP have also included the SDC internship policy approach at the SSU and the implementing partners, in order to increase the number of under-represented gender, caste and ethnic groups amongst MSFP staff.

3.3 Beneficiary Level Interventions

At the beneficiary level, MSFP made efforts to improve access to programme benefits by women, disadvantaged groups, and poor households in line with the targeting approach of the SDC. In Fiscal Year 2015-16, MSFP allocated at least 30% of the total MSFP funds to women, and 60% to the disadvantaged and discriminated. MSFP, especially through the programmes implemented by the IAs, also focused on improving representation and leadership of target groups in the LFGs, and the village-level multi-stakeholder mechanisms, such as the Agriculture, Forest and Environment Committees (AFEC). Through the preparation of new LFG operational plans (OPs), and the revision of old LFG plans, an opportunity was created to facilitate the LFGs for improving the opportunities and changing the rules in favour of women, the poor and disadvantaged groups.

4

ACHIEVEMENTS AND OUTCOMES

In terms of taking initiatives, the MSFP invested much time and effort in reducing the inequalities between men and women and amongst the social groups at multiple levels - i.e. at policy, programme, institutional and beneficiary level. The Mid-Term Review of the programme, commissioned in 2015, expressed the following.

“MSFP has made tremendous efforts to address issues of women, poor and the excluded. It has strong policy mandates for inclusion and for ensuring that the poor and the disadvantaged receive direct benefits. The largest part of its budget share is for the outcome related with the poor and the excluded, a clear indication of its commitment to GESI”.

MSFP Mid Term Review, Technical Report: Gender Equality & Social Inclusion and Livelihoods Assessment (page 46)

Policy level achievements

- Implementation, assessment and policy feedback on GESI Strategy for forest sector
- MoFSC GESI thematic working group and Focal Persons institutionalized in all the 5 Departments
- Support provided in the preparation of the GESI Code of Conduct for MoFSC

Programme and Institutional level achievements

- Awareness and application of gender, poverty and social equity approach in the programme cycle (the GPSE operational framework)
- Institutionalization of DAG targetting, and disaggregated beneficiary reporting system
- Institutionalization of DAG and gender focused budget planning and expenditure tracking (FFA)
- Improved workforce diversity at SSU and NGO implementing partners

Beneficiary level achievements

- Improved access to programme benefits/services by women (42%), poor (60%) & DAG (47%) hhs
- 33% of 22,478 full time jobs created from enterprise development & SFM accessed by women
- Increased representation of women (43%), Dalit(14%) and disadvantaged (50%) in Executive Committee of forest user groups
- 42% women, 15% Dalit and 45% DAG hold key leadership positions of LFGs - Chair or Secretary

Figure 4 Snapshot of MSFP's GPSE achievements

MSFP has achieved some visible GPSE-specific results, as summarized in Figure 4.

4.1 Policy Level Achievements

4.1.1 Policy feedback on GESI for incorporation in Forestry Sector Strategy

The assessment of the MoFSC GESI strategy helped to influence the policy making process and raised awareness of the GESI gaps among forest policy makers and planners. The findings and recommendations of the GESI implementation assessment were incorporated in the Forestry Sector Policy and the Forest Sector Strategy of 2015. The key recommendations of the assessment were:

- develop an operational plan of action including programmes with allocated budgets and result indicators to implement the GESI strategy;
- update the current GESI strategy responding to the gaps identified by the assessment, and adjust the strategy to respond to the emerging issues in the sector - e.g. federalism;
- arrange for GESI technical assistance services for at least 3 years to support a smooth and systematic implementation of the GESI strategy;
- integrate the GESI assessment findings and key recommendations in the Forestry Sector Policy and Forestry Sector Strategy.

4.1.2 GESI policy brief of the forestry sector

An analysis of strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for integration of GESI into the 4 key thematic areas of the forestry sector - poverty and governance, enterprise and commercialization, biodiversity and conservation, forestry and climate change - was undertaken for policy inputs, and the findings were presented to policy makers, decision makers as well as the FSS development team for consideration of GESI issues and opportunities in the sector.

4.1.3 GESI thematic working group

The GESI thematic group at the MoFSC has been reactivated during the MSFP period. One of the key achievements of the group was taking leadership

and coordination of the sector GESI strategy assessment, and disseminating the findings to the key stakeholders. The Coordinator of the GESI thematic working group was one of the key members of the forestry sector strategy drafting team.

4.1.4 The MoFSC GESI code of conduct

MSFP has supported the preparation of the GESI Code of Conduct for the MoFSC. The programme provided financial support to organize regional and national level consultations, meetings with forestry officials, including a separate meeting with women foresters. Led by the first women Joint Secretary of the Ministry, the consultations have generated insights and lessons on women's empowerment in the MoFSC, and the organizational system and capacity required for making the forest sector gender and socially inclusive.

4.2 Programme and Institutional Level Achievements

4.2.1 MSFP's GPSE conceptual and operational framework

The Gender, Poverty and Social Equity (GPSE) operational framework (November, 2012) was institutionalized in the MSFP, as far as time permitted. Key tools and policy approaches used for institutionalization of these frameworks are FFA, DAG targeting, WfD and providing internships, and gender and public audits. As expressed by the Mid-Term Review of the MSFP, the effort of the programme to integrate GPSE perspectives in the programme implementation was significant.

"The Gender Poverty Social Equity (GPSE) Conceptual Framework and Operational Checklist and its principles include a clear direction for promoting gender equality, pro-poor development and social inclusion at all stages of the programming and planning cycle, using affirmative action and addressing both practical and strategic gender and DAG specific needs".

Mid Term Review MSFP 2015 Technical Report: Gender Equality & Social Inclusion and Livelihood Assessment.

4.2.2 DAG and gender targeting, budgeting and tracking institutionalized

The beneficiary targeting, budget planning and expenditure tracking, following the FFA approach, was institutionalized at the SSU and the MSFP's

NGO implementing partners. The FFA revealed that in 2015, out of 70% of the total programme budget, 32% of programme funds were directly received by DAG beneficiaries, and 32% by women beneficiaries. FFA analysis also records that over the entire programme duration, 2012 to 2016, 27% of funds were directly received by women, and 29% by the disadvantaged.

4.2.3 Workforce diversity policy and internship programme for discriminated people

MSFP followed the WfD policy of the Swiss Embassy, and this has been instrumental in promoting diversity and inclusion in the MSFP SSU and partners. As at December 2015, before the closure of the Programme somewhat skewed the figures, women and men made up 33% and 67% of the total workforce in the SSU. Women also make up 27.5% of the total staff in manager and officer level position, indicating that the Programme management promoted women to decision-making levels. Moreover, the Programme was able to recruit 7.5% of the total staff from Dalit communities. The WfD was one of the criteria for selecting the programme implementing partners.

As a strategy to facilitate entry of young people from discriminated groups into the job market, the programme applied a positive discrimination approach and offered paid internship for young graduates who studied forestry, environmental and social sciences. As at December 2015, the MSFP SSU had recruited 11 interns, mostly women and under-represented social groups.

4.2.4 Increased technical skills and sensitivity on GESI in the GoN and NGOs

Nine thematic trainings, including GPSE in the curricula, were completed, at least one in each of the 6 MSFP clusters. A total of 231 persons (100 women, and 131 men) from the GoN and NGO partners were trained. Themes covered in the training were sustainable forest management, good governance, social mobilization, livelihoods and enterprise, and climate change adaptation. GPSE was mainstreamed in each of the themes as a cross cutting topic.

Table 1 Details of the Cluster Trainings

Service provider	Topic	days	No of participants		Total	Remarks
			Women	Men		
SA-Recoft	*9 trainings GESI & thematic	45	100	131	231	5 days
SA-Recoft	Gender audit	3	90	117	207	6 lots
SA-Recoft	TOT local resource person	7	4	14	18	2 x 6
SA-Recoft	Fudiciary risk & governance	3	57	78	135	6 lots x 2
WRFD-Stands Nepal	GESI TOT	7	13	19	32	
DFO-RFTC-WLCN	GESI mainstreaming	5	22	35	57	
Total			286	394	680	
			42%	58%		

Fiduciary risk management training and a follow-up refresher was also provided to around 135 staff and board members of the NGO implementing partners. Based on the in-depth training curriculum which also incorporated MSFPs' thematic procedural *How to Notes*, front line field staff and social mobilisers were trained on livelihoods and enterprise development, climate change and sustainable forest management, GESI, social mobilization and group governance.

All trainings were residential and 5 days in duration. It was ensured during the curriculum development that gender and inclusion perspectives were integrated into each thematic training which was also observed by the MTR review team.

"The Sustainable Forest Management and Climate Change module is better from a GESI perspective. It has an objective on mainstreaming GESI in climate change adaptation and mitigation plans and implementation, and almost a half-day session is on GESI integration in different plans like CAPA and LAPA. This is to be appreciated".

MSFP- Mid Term Review 2015, GESI Thematic Paper.

The Forest Officials from the DFOs and the Regional Forestry Directorate (RFD) were also trained in GESI in a separate intensive 5 day residential training. In total, 57 participants from the Western and Eastern Region forestry offices, together with a few NGO IA managers, attended. The post evaluation of the training reveals that the training had been useful for GESI conceptual clarity, use of the *How To Do* tools, and gaining technical skills on gender analysis.

MSFP also supported the establishment of a GESI Resource Center in the Western Regional Forestry Directorate office in Pokhara. The Center, with technical support from MSFP, developed a GESI training manual and produced 32 people (13 female and 19 male; 42% female) as GESI master trainers through organizing a 7 day residential GESI training; the master trainers included officials from the Regional Forestry Training Center, thus embedding the raising and understanding of GESI issues in the main forestry training institute for GoN staff in the western region.

4.2.5 Enhanced local capacity in gender auditing

MSFP also capacitated the local NGO implementing partners on gender auditing. The programme has prepared a *How To Do* institutional gender audit tool, the use of which the partners were trained on.

A total of 207 persons (90 women and 117 men) participated in the gender audit training. Ten gender audits were completed across the MSFP working, from the east to the far west. The organizational capacity of the local NGO implementing partners was assessed in five broad indicators as shown in the spider web chart below, which show the results from partners in Bhojpur district.

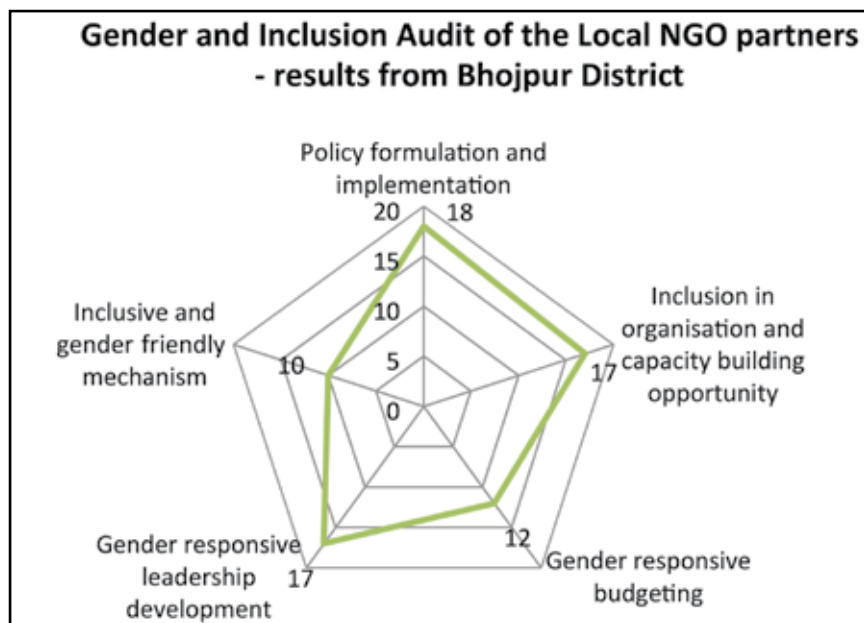
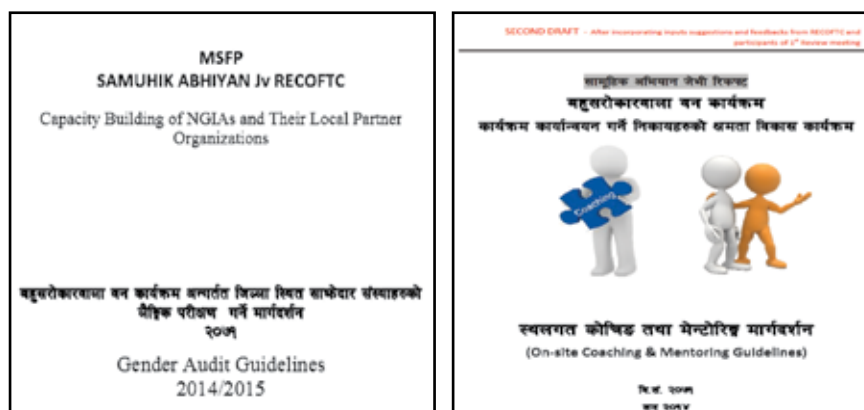


Figure 5 Results from a gender and inclusion audit



The GESI audit process itself was found to be very empowering for the local NGO i ting partners. Their self-realization on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges in GESI integration at the organizational level grew during the training. As a result, they committed themselves to preparation and implementation of a GESI mainstreaming action plan.

4.3 Beneficiary Level Achievement

4.3.1 Improved access to programme benefits by the target groups

In the MSFP districts, it is considered that access to programme benefits and services by the targeted group improved significantly during the Programme duration. Overall, the benefits reached to 749,064 hhs which included women headed households, the poor and disadvantaged hhs - see the Reflections below.

Moreover, the reach of benefits in the thematic intervention areas to these social groups is comparatively high. For example, in the livelihood improvement related interventions, 71% of the total beneficiaries were women and 83% were DAG. In the job and employment creation related interventions, women constitute 33% of the total beneficiaries, while the disadvantaged households constitute 64%. (Source: OMS report and activity beneficiary report, MSFP, 2016).

Reflection #1

“We sometimes felt so helpless and disappointed as we had no idea what to do and how to overcome our day to day problems and properly look after our family and children,” says Sushila Tharu, the chairperson of Hariyali Hastakala Women Group.

Similarly , an another member, Ms. Krishna Tharu: “we were so confined within the four walls at home doing all the household chores, that there was never enough time for us to earn even a

simple livelihood despite all the essential work we did. Moreover, people would often say that these women folk can't do anything productive like men; all we could do was silently listen to their degrading remarks and treatment as we were not aware of the opportunities around us nor were we empowered enough to dare to start some outside work like what we have recently been doing with technical support from MSFP/RIMS.”



Sushila Tharu and Krishna Tharu, of the Hariyali Hastakala Women Group (of Brakarpur-3, Kapilvastu), and their handicraft business

4.3.2 Disaggregated beneficiary profile of the MSFP

As shown in Table 2 below, the MSFP programme implemented by both the NGO IAs and the GoN implementing agencies has reached 749,064 hhs and significant numbers of beneficiaries are from disadvantaged, poor and women headed household and individuals. From the livelihood and climate adaptation activities alone, 302,101 hhs directly benefitted from MSFP support.

Beneficiary profile	DAG	Non DAG	TOTAL	Poor	Discriminated	Women/ Women Headed
HH	349,051 (62%)	400,013 (72%)	749,064	452,424 (81%)	350,7562 (64%)	311,314 (56%)
Individual	227,729	308,818	536,547	370,348	310,366	197,048

Table 2 Disaggregated Data on the Beneficiaries of MSFP's support

Source: MSFP activity beneficiary monitoring data f July, 2016

Note: There is an overlap in the hh beneficiary information with respect to women-headed and discriminated households as women are also defined as a discriminated group in relation to programme related benefits - hence totals come to more than 100%.

4.3.3 Improved representation and leadership of women, dalit and ethnic groups

The executive committee members and those in the leadership positions in LFGs are expected to be representative of all genders, caste/ethnicity and economic groups. For this to evolve, MSFP trusted to the social mobilization programme and the special role of the social mobilizers in the Programme implementation. A significant number of social mobilizers played a vital role in improving group governance and the facilitation of the empowerment process in the LFGs in the MSFP working areas.

In addition, the MSFP also gave priority to the inclusion of organizations working in remote areas and those working for disadvantaged group and women's empowerment during the selection of local implementing partners, the participants for the training programmes, and while establishing contracts for research, field studies and other micro projects. Similarly, in terms of capacitating women and members of disadvantaged groups to raise their voice

and to influence the LFG decision making process, MSFP has contributed to a great extent. As a result, women and the members of discriminated groups are now significantly represented in the Executive Committees of the LFGs. For example, as at 2016, the representation of women, Dalits and disadvantaged groups in the LFG Executive Committees is 43%, 14% and 50% respectively. The inclusion of women in these Executive Committees is far in excess of the stipulated level documented in the community forestry rules and regulations.

Similarly, there has been a marked improvement in the balance of power in terms of those occupying the key positions of Chair and Secretary in the forestry groups. As of July 2016, women make up 42% of these key position holders, while Dalits hold 15%, and over 45% of the key positions are taken up by members of disadvantaged groups in the LFGs (Source: OMS/MSFP-2016).

Reflection #2

“Change happened in my life because of the change agent and that change agent is MSFP-RRN who encouraged and guided me in each step of the way in organizing, participation, rights, democracy, gender issues and moreover to achieve the political space for women and women’s issues in the community, in the LFGs and CFUGs, with other local level service providers, at the VDC level and even at the district level”.

Sita Khadka Secretary of Urathe CFUG Terathum and social activist



4.3.4 Changing the rules

As of July 2016, 2,914 LFGs have revised their operational plans and included the GESI perspective in the plan. The GESI provisions included in the revised OPs have focused on increased representation of women and the disadvantaged in the Executive Committees and in leadership positions, and allocation of at least 35% of the LFG’s income for supporting women, the poor and the disadvantaged users - as stipulated in the revised Community Forestry Development (CFD) Guidelines of 2014. The GESI provisions were ensured through the facilitation and social mobilization support to the LFGs provided by the NGO implementing partners, with technical and oversight support from the DFOs.

5

KEY LEARNINGS

- 1) The forestry sector specific GESI Policy provisions created an enabling environment for the GoN and non-state actors to take GESI perspectives and issues into account in the sector's activities. However, having the GESI policy is insufficient to result in changes and impacts in the forest sector, and there is a strong need to strengthen institutional capacity and human resources in the sector to implement the policy. Moreover, it is essential that the MoFSC allocates regular annual budgets to implement the GESI policies, and to develop and implement GESI-responsive human resource strategies, and programme implementation procedures.
- 2) MSFP has made significant efforts in GPSE mainstreaming by developing its GPSE specific operational framework, the GESI tools, the *How to Note* guidelines on GPSE mainstreaming, the capacity building programmes, and ensuring social mobilizers and GPSE technical experts are hired by the NGO IAs during programme implementation. The Programme also made a significant effort to increase the access of women, poor, disadvantaged households and climate vulnerable households to income and job opportunities and programme benefits through strict enforcement of the disadvantaged group targeting approach.
- 3) Gender analysis, gender audit, gender budgeting approaches and tools need to be institutionalized in the GoN and non-governmental forestry institutions in order to capacitate them for meaningful GESI integration, and to capitalize on the sector's strengths demonstrated at the community forest user level – only in this way, will gender equality and social inclusion outcomes be seen at the national level.

- 4) GESI transformational change and empowerment of women and other discriminated social groups require joint leadership and strong commitment of both the Government and the development partners in the sector. MSFP staff recognized a gap in the inadequate provision for gender equality and social inclusion perspectives and activities in the programme document itself. Similarly a lack of GESI specific objectives and key result targets to monitor achievements at the outcome and impact level of the results chain, was a key reason for missed opportunities in achieving GESI transformational change.

6

THE WAY FORWARD

1) Continue the multi-stakeholder approach in the forestry sector

At the sector level, there is an enabling environment for building allies for implementing the MoFSC GESI strategy at multiple levels. The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) takes the lead for GESI mainstreaming at local development and local governance bodies. Similarly, the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW) has gender equality and women's empowerment policies along with well-established structures operating from local to district and central level. The MoWCSW is the lead institution for empowering women, girls, and influencing gender equality policies at all levels. At the district level, the District Forestry Sector Coordination Committees (DFSCC), which include line agencies other than forestry, staff from the district level Women and Children Development Office and civil society groups as members, are actively engaged in forestry development programmes. Similarly at the village level, the MSFP has supported the establishment and strengthening of the multi stakeholder Agriculture, Forestry and Environment Committees (AFEC). The AFEC is the most viable and sustainable institution at the VDC level in order to plan and implement GPSE-specific wider natural resource management programmes, including those concerned with climate change, food security and development of resilient livelihoods of local communities. There are also I/NGOs and bi-lateral projects and programmes working for promotion of GESI through various social and technically oriented programmes. The MoFSC can utilise these sister organizations as good opportunities for leveraging resources and implementing cost effective implementation of the sector's GESI strategy.

2) A GESI Unit at the MoFSC

The existence of a GESI unit in the Ministry headed by a Joint Secretary, with dedicated GESI technical experts, as well as full time GESI Focal Persons in all 5 Departments is crucial. The unit should be strengthened by allocating a dedicated GESI budget, staff trained in GESI, and staff fully focused on monitoring and evaluation. Following the closure of MSFP, strong efforts need to be made by concerned Ministry staff to ensure the GESI unit remains active and engaged in the future.

3) GESI competency criteria and responsibilities

These should be incorporated in the ToR of the GoN staff and senior managers of the programmes and projects. There should also be capacity enhancement and training activities on GESI at different institutional levels of government, of programme and projects, and their implementing agencies.

4) Workforce diversity and positive discrimination

Workforce diversity and positive discrimination policies of the GoN need to be implemented and monitored to foster women's advancement, opportunities, leadership skills and meaningful participation in the forestry sector.

5) Women as a specific and important target

Women should be considered as a specific and important target group in the GoN and donors' policy approaches, and especially in terms of interventions in the forestry sector. Labelling women under the category of disadvantaged group will ignore gender specific interests, needs and constraints, and reinforces existing gender inequalities.

6) GESI transformational change

As suggested by the MTR of the MSFP, which is also an outcome of meaningful GESI integration and institutionalization, transformational change is a long term process. The MSFP has laid down a strong foundation for this process at multiple levels from policy to practices, and from implementing agencies to the beneficiary level. Capitalisation of the MSFP good practices on GESI integration processes and methodologies by donors and GoN agencies in future forestry and climate change related policies, programmes and projects would make a solid contribution to the process of change in the sector.

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Prepared by the Multi Stakeholder Forestry Programme (2012 – 2016)

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Website: www.msfp.org.np