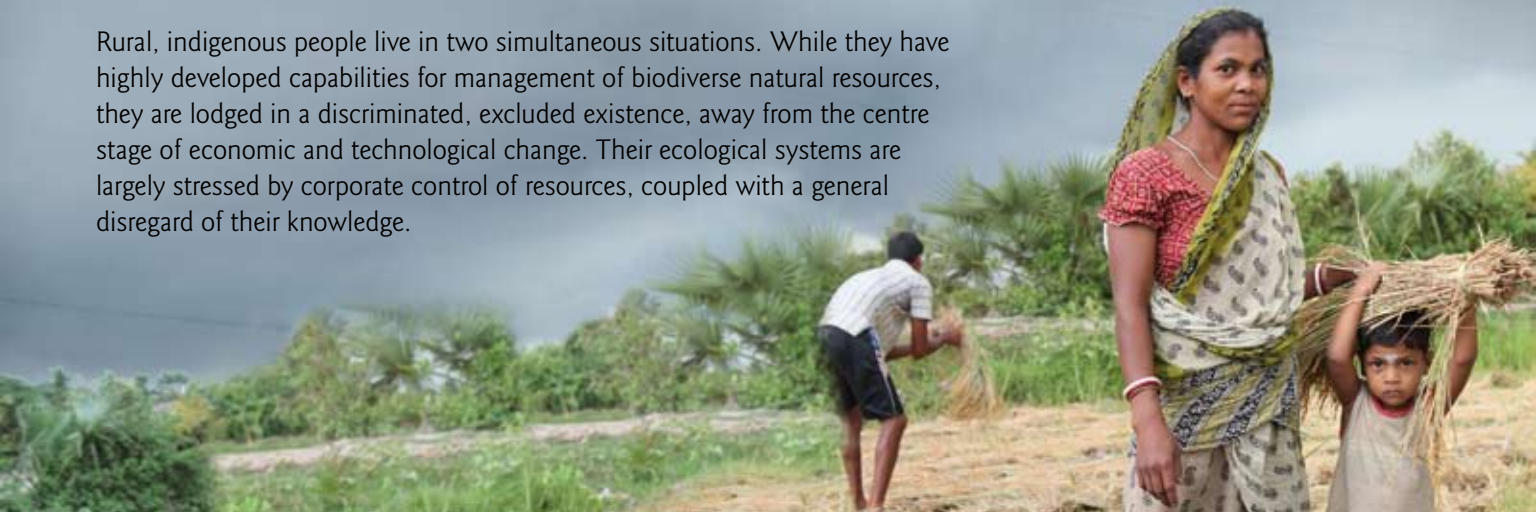


Gender Dimensions of Climate Change

Rural, indigenous people live in two simultaneous situations. While they have highly developed capabilities for management of biodiverse natural resources, they are lodged in a discriminated, excluded existence, away from the centre stage of economic and technological change. Their ecological systems are largely stressed by corporate control of resources, coupled with a general disregard of their knowledge.



Indigenous Women Engaging with Climate Change

Sadaka, a farmer of Jaintia Hills, India, reports about her “new difficulty” - the unseasonal and frequent heavy rains, adversely affecting the production of vegetables such as cauliflower, green peas and beans. “We do not know what and when to plant, because the climate has become unpredictable.” To combat this, women farmers have taken up new crop varieties which can withstand unseasonal heavy rains. Outlining the need for alternative livelihoods, they ask for 1) upgradation of traditional knowledge and skills; 2) introduction of new technologies; and 3) women’s unmediated access and control rights to land and forest resources

Women’s Land Use Knowledge and Entitlement in Swidden Agriculture in Bhutan and India

- Swidden cultivators conserve forests making them more productive than other fixed-field farmers.
- They also contribute to biodiversity conservation with skills and knowledge in mixed cropping, seed management and conservation of resources
- Controlled burning, and consequent weed and pest management, crop rotation and mutli-cropping helps swidden cultivators make efficient use of their small land holdings with higher yields and greater variety.



Gender, Renewable Energy and Climate Change

The distribution of improved cooking stoves and solar lanterns for households, resulted in a reduction of indoor air pollution and flexibility in cooking of the evening meal. However, these efforts did not result in questioning or changing the traditionally dominant role of women in cooking and cleaning within the household and maintained women's interaction with new technology along gendered lines. Effectiveness of renewable energy interventions lies in improving the existing livelihoods of women and provisioning of energy to kiosks, shops, agricultural production and enterprises.



Opportunities for Gender-Sensitive Interventions in Renewable Energy

Women spend time and energy collecting fodder, firewood and processing biomass for fuel, water and other resources to secure livelihoods. They cook on wood burning stoves exposing themselves to potential health hazards. This excessive use of women's energy is still largely invisible to energy and environmental analysts and planners. A scoping study covering six states of India suggests:

- Male centric gender and energy projects are different from women centric energy projects, and may lead to women not being engaged in all aspects of energy technology or service delivery.
- Institutional strategies should integrate energy technology for livelihoods with other necessary mechanisms like access to markets, finance, capacity development for innovative technology for women's well-being.
- Labour opportunity cost as comparative assessment between different options for access to household energy and income generation must be made.
- Several energy policies are silent on gender dimensions. It should be possible to not only have a gender analysis but also include women's empowerment goal within the framework of the announced policy.

UN Women is the global champion for women and girls. UN Women acts on the fundamental premise that women and girls worldwide have the right to live a life free of discrimination, violence and poverty, and that gender equality and women's unmediated economic rights are central to achieving development.

For further information

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