Good Practices and Way Forward for Integration of Gender and Indigenous Womens Knowledge and practices into Biodiversity Conservation

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Best Practises for Integration of Gender and Indigenous Womens Knowledge and practices into Biodiversity Conservation

- Indigenous women have a fundamental role in environmental conservation and preservation throughout the history of our Peoples.
- They are guardians of traditional knowledge –have responsibility to protect and perpetuate this knowledge.
- Indigenous crafts, music, songs, etc and our knowledge of agriculture/patoralism, hunting or fishing are all examples of some of our contributions to the world.
- Indigenous women have gender-specific knowledge and use of biodiversity. E.g in Kenya indigenous women are interested in natural resources, such as tree branches for firewood and shrub leaves and roots for medicine. The women seek and prepare food, medicine, fuel and building materials. Indigenous men also rely upon natural resources, for example to water their animals and to create settlements.
- Their social, cultural and economic roles including transmission of traditional knowledge is dependent upon the sustainability of locally available natural resources
- During CCRI in Kenya: Indigenous women shared extensive knowledge of the landscape, species available or extinct ,biodiversity hotspots etc and have knowledge on restoration of biodiversity and conservation practices that ensured sustainability e.g watershed and forests protection and restoration

Best practises

- Participation in decision making/policy processes .Indigenous women should have the same opportunities to participate, contribute to and benefit from conservation e.g NBSAPs,National reporting e,g inclusion of women in environment management committees or forest user groups leadership
- Gender responsive budgeting i.e allocation
- Policy level: Policy frameworks providing the basis for gender-sensitive planning and implementation e.g gender strategy and action plan at local level to advance gender equality in climate change actions under the Kenya climate change Act
- Building capacity and leadership skills of women
- Securing land rights for indigenous women
- Exchange visit among indigenous women groups
- Engaging local/county leadership: building indigenous women biodiversity not only as environment but as development agenda and having inter-cultural dialogue
- Mainstreaming indigenous women practises and knowledge and issues into all sectors policies and programs e.g health, education

Way Forward: Needs

- Availability of gender/indigenous disaggregated data: The most documentation e.g studies consider gender, especially the role of women within the context of forest conservation and ignore gender roles of men and women difference across different social classes, ethnic groups and communities, making it hard to inform policy
- Participation in decision making/policy processes needs to be enhanced and strengthening women groups that are existing and building capacity of groups
- Recognition of indigenous women as agents of change
- Resourcing local level actions on biodiversity
- Involvement of women in monitoring conservation outcomes and evaluating programmes e.g wildlife conservation, forest restoration etc
- Further analyses needed to understand the extent of incorporation of TK in community-based conservation projects and future implications

Conclusion

- Awareness of gender issues does matter, in a our society that increasingly challenges cultural, economic and social assumptions about the role of women in all aspects of daily life.

Asante!
Kaladh!