Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal

Gender Assessment & Gender Action Plan

Accredited Entity: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations1

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BAU	Business as Usual
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
BRCRN	Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal
CFUG	Community Forest User Group
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
EWS	Early Warning Systems
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measurement
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GII	Gender Inequality Index
HDI	Human Development Index
LDC	Least Developed Country
MPI	Multi-dimensional Poverty Index
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NRM	Natural Resource management
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SNRM	Sustainable Natural Resource Management
WUA	Water User Association

1 GENDER ASSESSMENT

1.1 Vulnerability of communities in Churia

1.1.1 Background

1. The Churia hills are located between the mid hill areas to the north and the plains in the south of Nepal (Terai), where the Churia hills perform critical ecological and socio-cultural functions both upstream and downstream. With more than 50% of its area under forests and riverine areas, the Churia hills render hydrological services such as regulating surface water flows and recharging groundwater. All major river systems in Nepal pass through the Churia hills before reaching the densely populated alluvial plains in the Terai and northern India.
2. Men and women living in the Churia are highly dependent on natural resources to maintain their livelihood. Agriculture is the main form of employment in the region, with 74% of the economically active population involved in the sector.[2] Forests are an essential resource and safety net for communities. In addition to providing key ecosystem and cultural services, forests provide diverse products including timber for construction, fuelwood, and other non-timber forest product (NTFPs) including plants for fodder, subsistence and medicinal plants. The Churia hills and Bhavar regions are an important area for ground water recharge. Thus, households in the Churia region are directly dependent on the health of Churia ecosystems to ensure their food, water and energy security.
3. The region is naturally in a more vulnerable situation, with friable soils, high exposure to flash flooding and landslides in the monsoon season, and frequently changing watercourses (Figure 1). Climate change coupled with unsustainable natural resource management (NRM) in the region is increasing the vulnerability of communities and ecosystems to landslides, flooding and erosion, extreme heat, water scarcity and forest fires among other climate-induced natural disasters (Figure 2).[3] In 2017, flooding in Nepal from January to September resulted in the destruction of 43,400 houses, 191,700 partially damaged houses, the displacement of 20,900 families, and the death of at least 160 people.[4] In addition, the loss to agriculture production due to floods in 2017 was estimated at over US$5.74 million, which has a major impact only rural livelihoods and food security.[5]

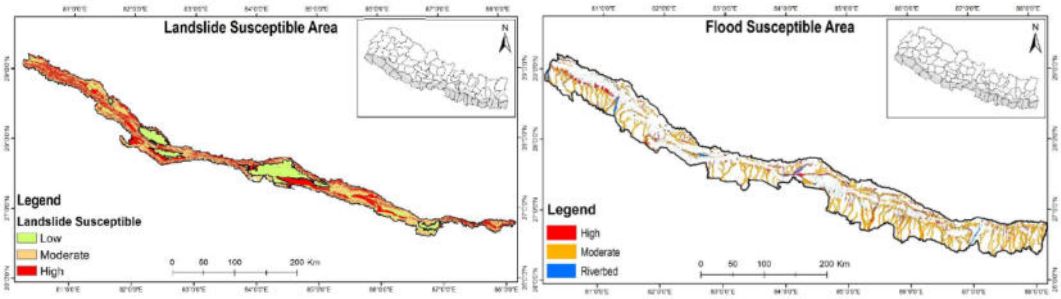

Figure 1: Overview of a) landslide susceptible areas and b) flood susceptible areas in the Churia region of Nepal

Source: PCTMCDB 2017

[2] UN Women 2016
[3] Yohe et al. 2007
[4] UN Office of the Resident Coordinator Nepal 2017
[5] Ibid.

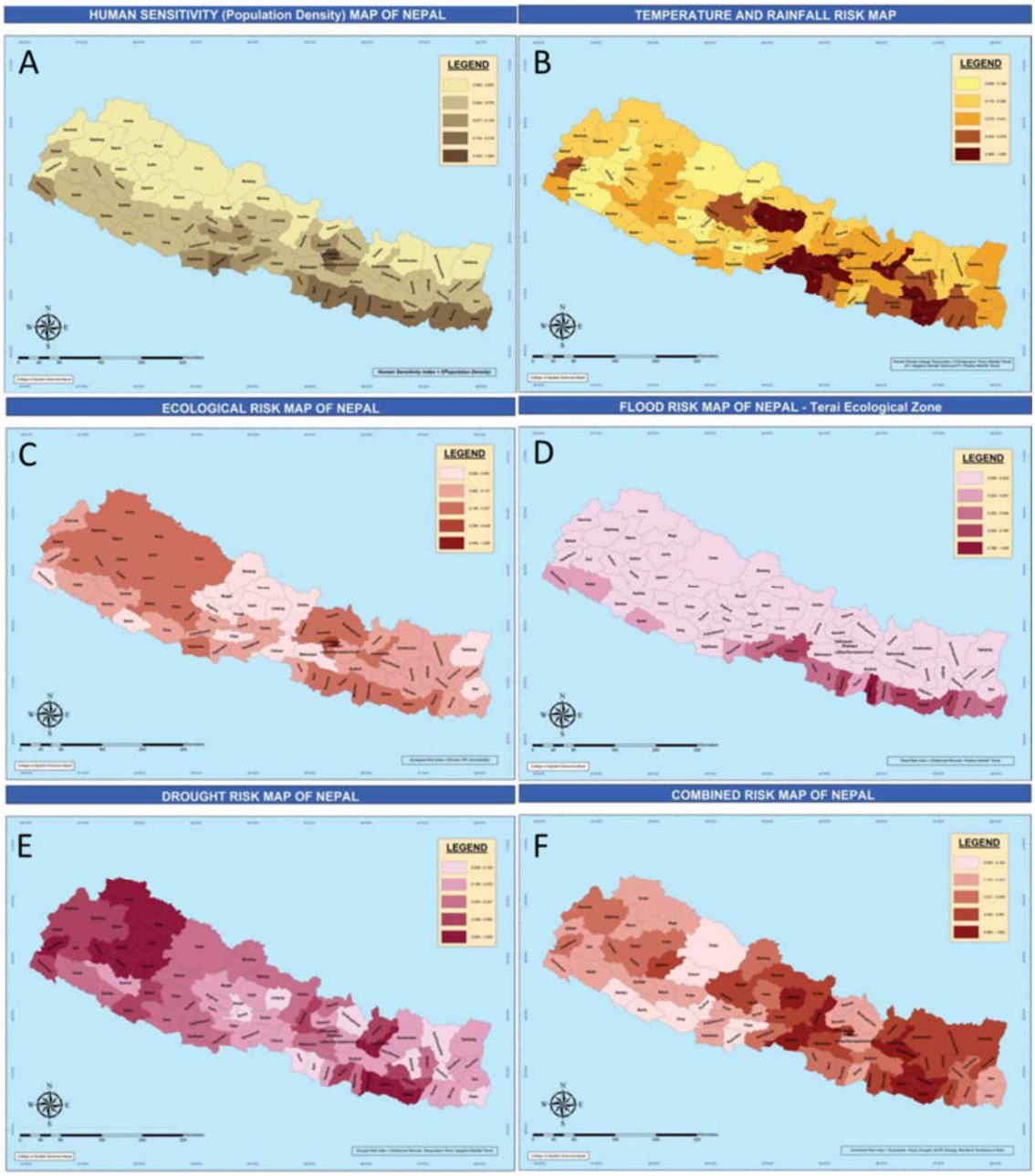

Figure 2: Maps demonstrating a) human sensitivity to climate change, b) temperature and rainfall risk, c) ecological risk, d) flood risk, e) drought risk, and f) combined risk.

Source: MoE 2010

4. Without significant landscape level investments in restoring natural capital and promoting climate-resilient land use practices, livelihoods and adaptive capacities, the impacts of climate change will further exacerbate environmental degradation, and thereby aggravate rural poverty, as well as food, water and energy insecurity in the Churia and in downstream regions. For the Churia region in particular, therefore, an approach of climate-resilient Sustainable Natural Resource Management (SNRM) is crucial for long-term environmental and social stability.

1.1.2 Project description

5. The overarching objective of the proposed GCF project is to enhance the climate resilience of ecosystems and vulnerable communities in the Churia region through integrated sustainable rural development and natural resource management approaches, including the following:
   - Strengthening capacities of local and provincial government officials on climate change, climate-resilient land use planning, SNRM and disaster risk reduction (DRR).
   - Strengthening the capacities of at least 750 local community-based organizations/ user groups[6] on recognizing climate threats, climate-resilient land use planning and sustainable natural resource management, and supporting them to implement climate-resilient land use interventions;
   - Large-scale adoption and promotion of climate-resilient land and forestry management practices on at least 512,499 ha, which specifically respond to climate-related threats, including landscape-scale restoration of critical ecosystems in vulnerable river systems;[7]
   - Reducing the incidence of sedimentary and flash flooding by improving soil and water conservation, and constructing small-scale infrastructure (stone walls, contour bunds, check dams, among others);
   - Reducing deforestation and forest degradation through the implementation of sustainable natural resource management (SNRM) practices and other measures that address the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and forest degradation;
   - Improving water recharge systems by reducing surface run-off water through the adoption of water conservation and water management practices/ technologies;
   - Diversifying livelihoods and enhancing incomes of local communities through the strengthening and promotion of climate-resilient value chains;
   - Strengthening capacities for adaptation, including to scale up DRR measures;
   - Improving information consolidation, dissemination and monitoring to raise awareness on climate change and climate resilient land use practices, and strengthen the utilization of climate information in decision making and planning processes.
6. More detailed project information on the specific activities can be found in the BRCRN project funding proposal.
7. Project implementation will occur in 26 of the most vulnerable river systems in Nepal,[8] with a focus on the Central and Eastern Region (Figure 3). BRCRN project activities will directly benefit 750 local community-based organizations/ user groups, containing at least 200,681 households with approx. 963,268 people (at least 50% of which are women, of which 77% are from groups that have experienced inter-generational socio-economic exclusion[9]). Together with reduced deforestation

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[6] Including community-forest user groups, leasehold forestry, private forest users and public forest user groups, water user groups, among others.

[7] Note: some activities may be implemented on overlapping parcels of land (e.g. measures to reduce deforestation such as controlled grazing, with sustainable forest management practices).

[8] A more detailed description of the vulnerability assessment can be found in the project feasibility study and the project funding proposal.

[9] Vulnerable groups are defined as "*…groups of people whose disadvantage is situational rather than structural. Their depravations are as a result of a particular situation (in some cases only temporarily) that has reduced their ability to withstand shocks rather than their more deeply embedded social identity*" (GESI Working Group 2017). While all project beneficiaries are considered vulnerable to climate change, since they live in highly and moderately vulnerable river systems, there is differentiated vulnerability within with river systems, where some inhabitants are considered more vulnerable due to their socio-economic situation, location of settlement (e.g. in high risk areas for flooding or landslides), or due to inter-generational exclusion/ marginalization (see following note on excluded groups), among other factors. Excluded groups are defined as "*…those who have experienced inter-generational discrimination and have been systematically excluded due to economic [situation], caste, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and geographical reasons*" (GESI Working Group 2017). This includes groups including women, poor people, Dalits, Adivasi/ Janajati, Madheshis, Muslims, people with

and forest degradation resulting from project activities, the BRCRN project will result in lifetime emission reductions that exceed 11.48 million tCO_2eq. Over 206,277 ha of critical ecosystems (forests, wetlands and grasslands) will be restored through project implementation. In total, over 3.2 million inhabitants (51% women) of the BRCRN project area will indirectly benefit from improved institutional capacities and strategic planning to support the scaling up of climate-resilient land use practices within the project area.

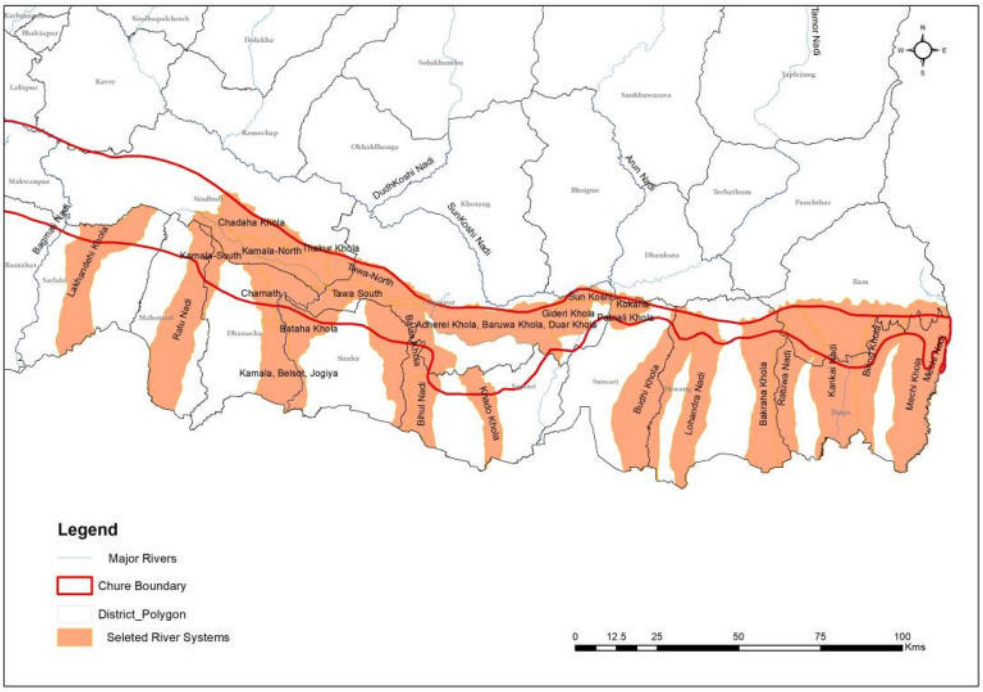

Figure 3: Project implementation area

**Note: The red boundary shows the core BRCRN intervention zone within the river systems including the Churia hills, Bhavar, Dun and upstream Terai.*

1.1.3 Gender assessment

8. This Gender Assessment aims to provide an overview of the gender-context in Nepal, with a focus on gender issues that are relevant for the proposed project *´Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal´* (BRCRN). Specifically, this assessment aims to inform project design to ensure that key gender considerations have been effectively mainstreamed throughout the project proposal.
9. The assessment has been conducted based on available data from studies conducted by the Government of Nepal, donor agencies, civil society organizations and other stakeholders. Various consultations were held from November 2017 to March 2018 with diverse actors,[10] including women's associations and organizations at the national and local level (e.g. Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO), National Indigenous Women's Federation (NIWF), the Himalayan Grassroots

disabilities, third-gender and people living in remote areas. Socially-excluded groups comprise over 77% of the project population (including Indigenous Peoples 31%, Terai-Madhesi 28%, Dalits 13% and Muslims 5%, among others; CBS 2014).

[10] The annex of the project´s Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) contains a detailed list of the consultations conducted for the elaboration of the GCF proposal. It further includes meeting minutes and organizations consulted, along with other pertinent information.

Women´s Natural Resource Management Association (HIMAWANTI), and the Community-based Forestry Supporters´ Network (COFSUN), among others), to provide direct feedback on the current context and barriers, as well as gender-responsive measures and related monitoring and evaluation (M&E) considerations. At the local level, 268 local people living within the project area were consulted, of which 40% were women. A targeted gender workshop with key actors was held in Kathmandu on February 21, 2018 to further discuss the preliminary findings from the consultations and gender analysis, and to provide feedback and key insights into the elaboration of a gender action plan. In total, 420 people were consulted in the preparation of the feasibility study, gender assessment and gender action plan. Detailed meeting summaries and attendance sheets can be found in Annex 3 of the BRCRN project´s Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF).

10. The following sections will focus on the status of gender inequality in Nepal, and the identification of challenges, barriers and opportunities for empowering women and promoting their equality within the agriculture and forestry sectors. They will develop concrete recommendations to support the mainstreaming of gender in the BRCRN project, ensuring gender-sensitive measures that overcome key barriers and a gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, which closely monitors the impacts of the project on both men and women, as well as inter-sectoral dimensions of inequality including age, caste, social status and inter-generational exclusion, among other factors.

1.2 Gender inequality in Nepal

11. The population of Nepal in 2016 was just under 30 million people, of which 52% are women.[11] While Nepal has made substantial progress in enhancing gender equality in the last three decades, gender discrimination and inequality are still major problems faced by the country. Inequality among women remains a challenge as well, where there are differences in equality based on age, position in the family, marital status, religion, caste and ethnicity, among other factors.

12. The following sub-sections will provide an overview of the main challenges for achieving gender equality in Nepal, zooming in where possible on the dynamics and trends experienced in the BRCRN project area.

Poverty & Income

13. Nepal is one of the world's least developed countries (LDC) with a per capita income of $766.[12] In 2014, Nepal achieved a score of 0.116 according to the multidimensional poverty index (MPI), [13] with an estimated 26.9% of the country´s population affected by multidimensional poverty, equivalent to around 7.5 million people.[14] Focusing on income-related poverty, approximately 15% of the population is considered to be living below the poverty line of $1.99 per day.[15]

14. The country has experienced rapid development in the last two decades and the government has made substantial progress in working toward its goal to graduate from LDC to developing countries status by 2022. The government is committed to tackling poverty, and has been committed to the implementation of measures to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in addition to

[11] World Bank 2016
[12] MoF 2016
[13] MPI considers three core dimensions as a measure of poverty: i) health (nutrition, child mortality), ii) education (years of schooling, children enrolled) and iii) standard of living (e.g. cooking fuel, toilet, water, electricity, floor, assets). Additional information can be found at: http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi
[14] UNDP 2016
[15] Ibid.

national targets. Nepal has made large strides in addressing poverty at the national level; the country´s Human Development Index (HDI)[16] value has improved from 0.476 to 0.558 from 2005 to 2015.[17]

15. While Nepal has made substantial efforts to advance gender equality and empowerment in the country, it is still a major challenge for the country to eradicate poverty and promote equality. Women´s HDI values (0.538) continue to lag behind men's (0.582).[18] Another challenge remains to address poverty and inequality within ethnic minority and other excluded groups.[19]In 2015, indigenous peoples (Janajatis/ Adivasi, 0.482), Dalits (0.434), and Muslims (0.422) experienced lower HDI values in comparison to other high-caste groups such as Brahmins (0.538) and Chhetri (0.538).[20] While the general trend of inequality is decreasing in the country, it remains a challenge to be addressed.

16. The Churia Terai-Madhesh region faces unique poverty related obstacles. HDI values for groups in the Terai-Madhesh region (0.454) are lower than mountain and hill groups (0.511).[21] Many poor households sell firewood and other forest products in order to supplement their income from other sources for meeting their subsistence requirements, and some work for the rich timber traders who might be harvesting (formally or informally/illicitly) timber and other products from Churia.[22] Thus, forests serve as a safety net for many communities in the Churia Terai-Madhesh region.

17. Female-headed households make up around 20% of households in the project area, lower-than the national average of 26%.[23] An analysis of a 1991 *Agricultural Credit Survey* showed the incidence of poverty in female-headed households (FHH) compared to male-headed households was 50.7 percent to 47.2 percent, respectively.[24] However, there is a need to disaggregate female-headed households between those households that are female-headed due to male migration for employment, in which the sending of remittances prevents the household from entering poverty, versus households that are female-headed due to widowing, divorce or unmarried. Considering the second group of female-headed households, a much larger proportion of FHH fall below the poverty line due to gender discrimination in access to and control over productive resources and other economic and political opportunities.[25] The disadvantaged position of female-headed households can be seen by the fact that landholdings of FHH are consistently and substantially lower in all regions; e.g. in 1991 more than 13% of households were female-headed but only 6% of farms were owned by women (more information below in the Section on resource access).[26] Expert analysis also shows that female-headed households often have lower literacy and educational rates, high dependency ratios and greater lack of access to information and media.[27] Thus, barriers

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[16] HDI takes into account three dimensions to provide an estimation of to assess the development of a country. It is based on three dimensions: long and healthy life (life expectancy at birth, knowledge (expected ears of schooling, mean years of schooling), a decent standard of living (GNI per capita). Additional information can be found at: http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi

[17] UNDP 2014

[18] UNDP 2016

[19] Excluded groups are those who have experienced inter-generational discrimination and have been systematically excluded due to economic, caste, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation and geographical reasons. Such groups include women, poor, Dalit, Adivasi/Janajati, Madhesi, Muslims, people with disabilities (PwD), third gender & people living in remote areas, among others (GESI Working Group 2017)

[20] UNDP 2014 in UNDP 2016

[21] UNDP 2014

[22] Chhetri 2004

[23] CBS 2014; Based on district averages.

[24] ADB 1999

[25] JICA 2017

[26] ADB 1999

[27] JICA, 2017.

facing female headed households come in terms of workload and the impacts of social discrimination on access to food, health, nutrition and education.

Gender Inequality Index (GII)

18. Nepal´s Gender Inequality Index (GII) for 2015 was 0.497, with an overall ranking of 115 out of 159 countries ranked.[28]While still lagging internationally, gender empowerment has improved substantially from 2001 to 2011 when considering the improvement in the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)[29] from 0.361 to 0.564, due to increased political traction and the strengthening of policy frameworks related to gender and social inclusion.[30]

Education

19. Gender gaps in the education sector continue to persist, where girls and women tend to have lower levels of education, especially in rural areas. The percentage of women participating in primary education has increased substantially in the last two decades, where the number of women completing 12 grades rose from 21% to 42% (Figure 4).[31] Nonetheless, equality can still be promoted in terms of access to education, especially in rural areas where studies have found that girls´ education often remains a lower priority.[32]

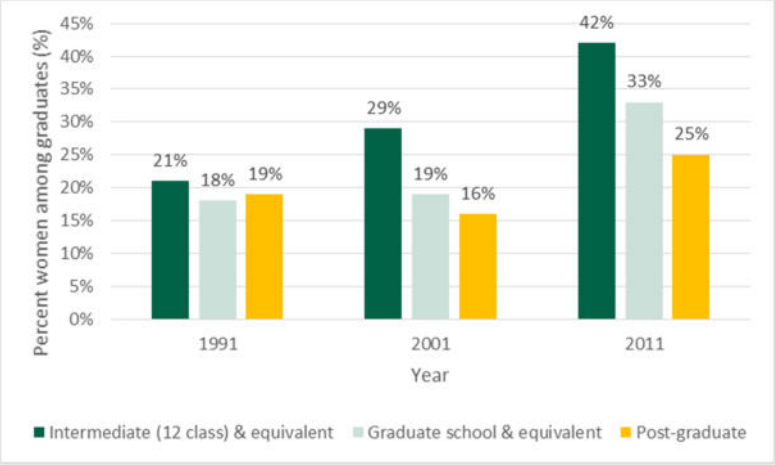

Figure 4: Women graduates (% of total) by level of education from 1991-2011 in Nepal

Source: UN Women (2016)

20. Boys´ education is often prioritized over girls' education in many rural communities in Nepal.[33] Girls are often taken out of school to support with the maintenance of the family and farm and the collection of natural resources (e.g. water, livestock feed, firewood, etc.). Women further experience higher dropout rates due to marriage and pregnancy. While there has been a trend improving access to education for girls and women, the country still lags behind. In 2011, national

[28] UNDP 2016; Additional information can be found at: http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII

[29] GEM assesses equality based on three main dimensions: i) public participation and decision-making, ii) economic participation and decision making and (iii) power over economic resources. Additional information can be found at: http://www.gaportal.org/global-indicators/gender-empowerment-measure

[30] Adhikary 2017

[31] CBS 2014; UNDP 2014; UN Women 2016

[32] CARE 2008

[33] CARE 2008

literacy rates for women were only 57%, whereas 75% of men were considered literate.[34] Dalit women, especially Dalit women living in the Terai, and Muslim women have literacy rates that are substantially below the national average (Figure 5).

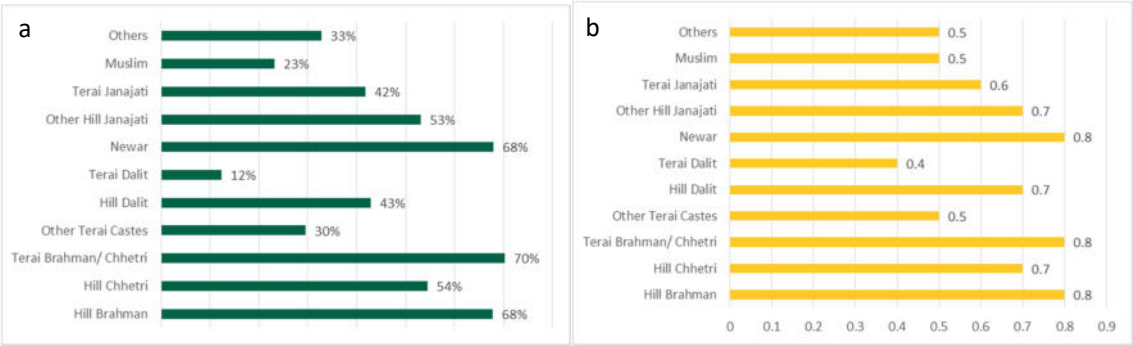

Figure 5: a) Adult (15+) female literacy, and b) female-male literacy ratio in Nepal in 2011

Source: Gurung and Tamang 2014 in UN Women 2016

21. In the BRCRN project area, similar trends are observed where women are often required to leave their schooling early to support with the maintenance of their household and livelihoods. Education rates lag behind the national average, especially for women, who are more likely to be illiterate.35 Based on district averages, around 45% of women in the project area are unable to read or write (Figure 6).[36] Often there is a lack of leadership and empowerment of women, which is reinforced through limited/ lower quality education provided to girls (Figure 7).[37] This has been identified as a barrier to sustainable development in the region, as they may not have the capacities to actively participate in decision making platforms.[38] A CFUG member in a study by Lama et al. (2017) gave the following statement highlighting the gender-specific challenges faced by CFUGs:
22. "*…even if you put women in the committee, if they have to be sent to some other place for training they will not be able to speak and write in front of others. Due to the lack of education they will not take advantage of the opportunities that come to them*" (p.257).
23. Thus, education not only has a major impact on capacity building for sustainable development and livelihood improvements, but also in women's engagement in decision making and planning processes.

[34] UN Women 2016
[35] Shrestha 2015
[36] CBS 2011
[37] CARE 2008
[38] Lama et al. 2017

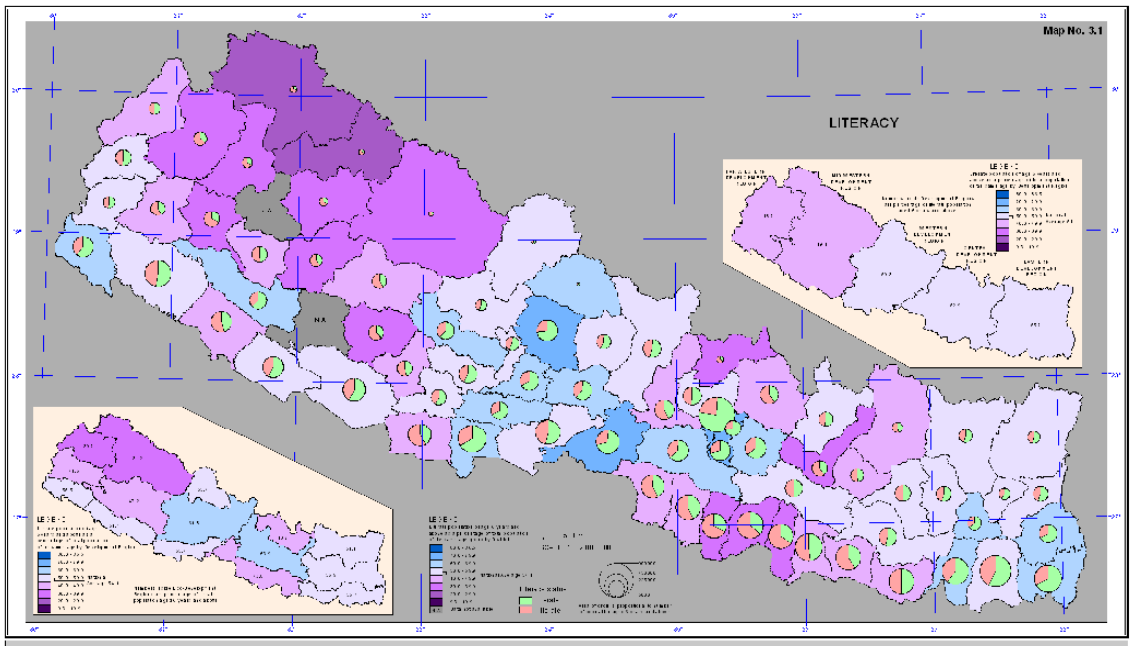

Figure 6: Literacy in Nepal in 2011

Source: CBS 2011; http://cbs.gov.np/index.php?route=information/gis_maps

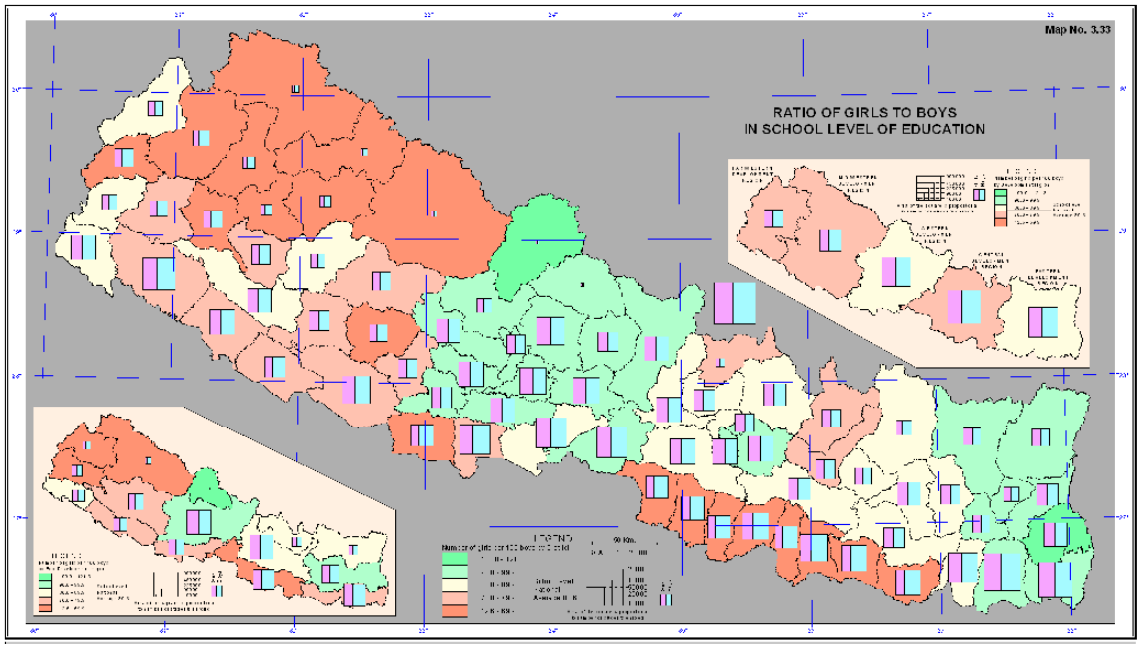

Figure 7: Ratio of girls to boy in school level education

Source: CBS 2011; http://cbs.gov.np/index.php?route=information/gis_maps

Health

24. As with other sectors covered, major improvements in improving gender-equality have been observed in Nepal´s health sector, where it has been noted that significant improvements have

been made in improving maternal and children´s health in Nepal in the last two decades. During the period from 1996 to 2013, the country´s maternal mortality rate declined from 539 to 170, women´s life expectancy rose from 55.5 to 70 years, and the total fertility rate also declined from 4.6 to 2.6.[39]

25. Nonetheless, rural areas continue to lag behind the progress made in urban areas. Rural communities in Nepal often have limited access to health services, largely due to poor infrastructure, limited access to qualified professionals and other socio-economic and cultural barriers, such as limited economic rights of women, lack of empowerment of women, gender and caste-based discrimination, poor education of girls, among others.[40] Women from poor households and marginalized minority groups, especially Dalits and Muslims, often experience additional discrimination in accessing health care.[41]

26. In the BRCRN project area, many communities have limited access to clean water, especially in dry seasons, when water scarcity becomes a major challenge for many.[42] As a result, many communities rely on contaminated water sources for some parts of the year.[43] Other gender-related health issues identified by focus groups included goiters, bone and joint issues associated with heavy lifting of water jugs, firewood collection, among other physical tasks. With climate change and increasing resource degradation, increasing water and natural resource scarcity could exacerbate these health impacts through reducing the abundance of safe water resources and by increasing collection time (e.g. greater distances), which disproportionately affects women.[44] Dalits and other ethnic groups may experience additional challenges. Cases of discrimination have been reported at village wells, where Dalits were forced to wait until all other castes had filled their water collection vessels first.[45]

27. The burning of fuelwood and cow dung, the main sources of energy in the Churia and Terai regions respectively, have major impacts on human health. Women are especially exposed to negative impacts as they are responsible for cooking for their family and inhale the harmful fumes.

Political Participation & Decision Making

28. At the household level, women are often in charge of domestic tasks, and in general have less power over decision making within households. Variations in control over decision making exist related to regional location, education, employment, region, socio-cultural background and ethnicity, among other factors.[46] There is a great range of variation in the involvement of women in decisions regarding economic activities between ethnic groups and types of household economic activities. For example, within Gurung communities, a study found that in 43% of households both men and women jointly decided the allocation of family labour to on-farm and marketing activities, but in Tharu communities this percentage was higher at 90 percent.[47] In general, women's autonomy in household decision making is still disadvantaged due to lack of awareness of opportunities and rights. Nonetheless, when it comes to family well-being related activities such as health and education, women are generally found to be more actively involved within many ethnic groups.

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[39] UN Women 2016
[40] CARE 2008; Adhikary 2017
[41] UN Women 2016
[42] Karn 2007; President Chure-Tarai Madhesh Conservation Development Board 2017
[43] Singh Danuwar 2008; Rai et al. 2012
[44] President Chure-Tarai Madhesh Conservation Development Board 2017
[45] CARE 2012
[46] Devkota et al. 1999; Archarya et al. 2010
[47] Devkota et al. 1999

29. Since 2001, women have experienced increased access to economic resources, property and micro-credit and the percentage of households in which women own land has considerably increased.[48] Women access and control over economic resources plays a critical role in their access to education and health and provide the foundation for empowerment and equality. However, although the slight increased ownership of land gives women some leverage in terms household decisions regarding property, several barriers still remain. Barriers of limited access to credit and support services, curtailed mobility due to threat of violence, perhaps both in the private and public sphere, and the lack of recognition by the rest of the community of their potential economic role continue to restrict women's roles in decision making processes.[49] Regional differences have been found with women in male-headed households within the hills having more freedom of mobility and access to household financial resources than women in the Terai.[50]

30. While policies have become increasingly advanced in mandating the participation of women in political spaces and other decision making bodies, a major gap remains in ensuring meaningful participation. The 2015 constitution states that 33% of parliamentary seats in government must be filled by women (Article 84, 8), and similar provisions are in place to ensure women´s participation in village assemblies and other formal decision making bodies (including within user groups).

31. At the village level, while Water User Associations require least 33% participation by women and CFUGs 50%, it has been highlighted that often women´s full participation is limited due to the persistence of barriers such as time-poverty,[51] lack of capacities, exclusionary institutions and the domination of elite men in decision making spheres.[52] Other concerns raised in the consultations included that when women are able to participate they are often from elite groups, and that marginalized women face more barriers in accessing meaningful decision making platforms within user groups.

32. Time-poverty in Nepal, especially in the Churia, is a major barrier to the participation of women in decision making, as many women spend between 10.5 to 13 hours a day on maintaining their livelihoods. The Churia experiences high migration of men for work,[53] leading to exacerbated time-poverty, as women need to compensate for the absence of men in their households by taking on their chores and responsibilities.[54] On the other hand, studies have found that women with migrant husbands often have greater autonomy and decision-making authority at the household level.[55]

33. Closely linked to time-poverty is the fact that women in the Churia have less access to quality education and are more likely to be illiterate. This has greatly limited their capacities to participate in such fora, and to make decisions on sustainable natural resource management. A study by Lama et al. (2017) noted that this was further exacerbated by exclusionary institutions, where illiteracy, low self-esteem and lack of capacities were major barriers for women's effective and full participation in forest user groups´ executive committees. It should be noted that these barriers are not only experienced by women, but also impact the participation of indigenous groups and ethnic minorities in the BRCRN project area. Executive committees in community forest user groups

[48] UN Women 2016
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Defined as having over 10.5 hours per day dedicated to maintaining one's livelihood (e.g. income generation, family care, etc.).
[52] Lama et al. 2017; Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management 2017
[53] Shrestha 2015; USAID 2016
[54] Lama et al. 2017; Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management 2017
[55] Kaspar 2006 and Yabiku et al. 2010 in Lama et al. 2017

have a history of being dominated by men from advantaged castes, limiting the participation of women, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities in decision making processes.[56]

34. Thus, while it has been an important first step to provide women with the legal basis to become engaged in decision making structures and committees within community-based organizations (e.g. establishing requirements such as 50% female membership and requiring representation on executive committees within community forestry user groups), additional policies, incentives and measures are required to empower women, including women from marginalized communities, and ensure they have the capacities, time and platform to effectively participate and contribute to decision making. Champions are needed to support women in becoming increasingly engaged in decision making.[57]

Resource Use, Income & Labor Force

35. Access to and control over resources, especially in the forestry and agriculture sectors, remains a major barrier for women's empowerment and gender equality in Nepal.[58] This challenge is further exacerbated when looking at women from different castes/ ethnicities, single women, widowed women and disabled women.

36. Women often do not hold land titles, due to customary and statuary laws that have limited land ownership in the past. This has created major obstacles for women to access credit, technical support and other support services.[59] In 2011, female-headed households (FHH) represented 19.7 percent of the total agricultural landholders in Nepal, representing a 9.7% increase since the last decade.[60] The disadvantaged position of FHHs can be seen by the fact that landholdings of FHH are consistently and substantially lower in all regions; in 1991 more than 13% of households were female-headed but only 6% of farms were owned by women.[61]

37. Women are highly engaged in the agricultural sector, including in crop production and raising livestock. In 2017, it was estimated that 84.3% of women were engaged in agricultural activities, in comparison to only 62.2% of men.[62] An ongoing trend towards the *´feminization´* of agriculture can be observed in rural areas in Nepal, due to men obtaining off-farm work or migrating to urban areas or foreign countries for work.[63] As a result, women are increasingly responsible for activities that were formerly performed by men, such as ploughing or other activities associated with more strenuous physical labor, in addition to their normal activities tending to crops and livestock. This trend is extremely pronounced in Nepal, where the number of female headed households has more than doubled in the last decade.[64]

38. Livestock is kept as an asset as well as for manure and draft usage. In rural area, by generating bio-gas from dung, livestock also serves as a source of energy for lighting as well as cooking.[65] With regards to livestock, women contribute nearly 70% of the work for livestock reading, especially related to forage collection, cleaning stalls, and feeding animals.[66] Practices are often time-intensive, and women spend substantial time cutting grass, collecting fodder and taking animals to

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[56] Lama et al. 2017; Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management 2017
[57] Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management 2017
[58] UN Women 2016; USAID 2016; Adhikary 2017; Lama et al. 2017
[59] UN Women 2016
[60] CBS 2014
[61] ADB 1999
[62] ILO 2017
[63] Ibid.
[64] CBS 2014b in Adhikary 2017
[65] Adhikary 2017
[66] Adhikary 2017

pasture or forested land. Men are more often responsible for milking animals, and commercialization aspects (e.g. selling milk and other livestock products).[67] Men are more often responsible for larger animals (cows, buffalos), whereas women have more responsibilities over smaller ruminants and animals.[68] While women are considered "resource poor in terms of raising and trading livestock", Adhikary 2017 notes that programs adopting gender-responsive budgets have increased women's participation in agricultural development programs, and livestock rearing. Time-saving activities, including integration of fodder with crops, agroforestry systems, and improved housing[69] are often not adopted due to the lack of finance/credit, and lack of awareness and capacities.

39. A recent study by World Bank and FAO (2018) found that women in Nepal have" high control over agricultural income", including women from households with men who have migrated for work elsewhere as well as women in households where the men have not migrated. They found that women in non-migrant households have higher control of non-agricultural income, however they are also more likely to engage in off-farm work as well as they often receive remittances and have less time-poverty.

40. The ´feminization´ of agriculture as such has led to numerous environmental, social and economic challenges. Women in rural areas are often ´time poor´, with women working over 10 hours more per week on average than men when taking unpaid labor into account.[70] However, in agricultural communities in the Churia and Terai regions, there are cases of women working up to 12 or 13 hours a day on average.[71] Labor shortages are a major challenge for the agricultural sector, and have led women to focus on high-value and less labor intensive crops. Increasing land abandonment has also been associated with high levels of male migration, the feminization of agriculture and the resulting challenges such as time-poverty. Such trends have led to a decline in certain agricultural activities that has contributed to food insecurity in some communities. Social impacts include increased family stress for both female household heads and their family, as well as health impacts due to hard labor and exhaustion due to their household responsibilities (paid and unpaid labor).[72] There is a need to promote time-saving land use practices and technologies, however extension services in Nepal are weak, and women do not have sufficient information about and access to labor-saving practices technologies (see Feasibility Study for more detailed information on extension services).[73] Increasingly women are joining community-based organizations, which can support them through collective action, investments and ultimately help overcome some of the barriers faced by women (e.g. access to knowledge, credit, inputs/ tools, among others). CBOs often dedicate a certain percentage of their funds (e.g. CFUGs dedicate at least 35%) to pro-poor programs that are dedicated to support the most vulnerable households within CBOs. World Bank and FAO (2018) noted that over 56% of women from migrant households (i.e. households with at least one family member who has migrated) are members of an agricultural, financial, social and or religious groups, compared to 47% of women from non-migrant households.

41. Rural communities are also highly dependent on local forest resources to maintain their livelihoods. Men are often engaged in timber collection, making fire lines, fencing and forest patrolling, however, this means that they do not necessarily visit the forest on a daily basis.[74] Women on the

[67] Adhikary 2017
[68] Adhikary 2017
[69] FAO 2015
[70] Adhikary 2017
[71] USAID 2016
[72] Adhikary 2017
[73] World Bank and FAO 2018
[74] Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management 2017

other hand often have better knowledge about the state of forest resources as they are responsible for collecting fodder, firewood, leaf litter and NTFPs from the forest on a daily basis.[75]Women's tasks are often unpaid or poorly paid, whereas men are more engaged in forest-activities that are paid either by the community or through the commercialization of timber and other forest products.[76] Given the challenges faced by women to participate in decision making and trainings, women often have minimal input in forest-related decision making, despite their daily interactions and knowledge of the forest.

42. Forest sector CBOs aim to improve women´s participation in forest-related decision making, and have emerged as a key mechanism for enhancing the socio-economic and political status of women and disadvantaged groups in rural Nepal.[77] Majority of research focuses on Community-forestry User Groups (CFUGs), who have developed gender-sensitive guidelines that aim to empower and engage women through their institutional structures (described below in the institutional and policy chapter), ensuring women´s representation on CFUG executive committees and promoting inclusive benefit sharing. Women-led CFUGs have also been promoted (i.e. CFUGs with all-women executive committees), and in 2012 there were 1,035 women-led CFUGs.[78] Research has found that these CFUGs have strong results in improving forest cover, maintaining transparency, and ensuring financial accountability. Furthermore, women-led CFUGs also create an empowering environment for women, which increases the participation and engagement of women within CFUGs. Women´s participation in executive committees has also increased, although this is largely attributed to positive discrimination policies. Nonetheless, CBOs still can improve in terms of gender-equality and –sensitization, as well as social inclusion and benefit sharing and several organizations have developed best practices and recommendations to continue to promote GESI within these institutions (see Chapter 1.5 and 2 below).

Gender Violence

43. Violence against women and girls has been identified as one of the main barriers that Nepal faces towards reaching substantive equality.[79] Approximately 22% of rural women reported having been subjected to physical violence, in comparison to 19% of women living in urban areas.[80] The *´Domestic Violence and Punishment Law´* was enacted in 2009. However, the actual socialization and enforcement of the law is said to be limited, where violent incidences are often not reported or investigated.[81]

44. Such trends are also evident in the BRCRN project area, where interviews with women's groups confirmed the persistence of gender violence in the region. Women's lower access to education and health care, limited economic rights, lack of empowerment and gender and caste-based discrimination are said to contribute to the prevalence of violence against women in rural areas, among other factors.[82]

45. In 2017 the Government of Nepal set up a hotline for reporting gender based violence, and established a network of service providers (including local NGOs and CSOs) to support gender-based violence victims, and prevention. This has improved reporting of GBV, and has improved

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[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid.
[77] However, various studies have noted that more can be done to improve benefit sharing, social inclusion and gender equality within CFUGs.
[78] RECOFT and FAO 2015
[79] UN Women 2016; Adhikary 2017
[80] UN Women 2016
[81] UN Women 2016; Adhikary 2017
[82] CARE 2008; UN Women 2016

information dissemination on legal protections, and support services. Within the project´s districts, there are a number of NGOs working in awareness raising, advocacy and support services.[83] Various working on gender in Nepal have noted the importance of engaging both men and women in gender sensitization and social inclusion, including promoting male and female role models, leaders and trainers within projects and communities.[84]

Figure 8: Number of NGOs providing support services for gender based violence (per district)

Source: Asia Foundation, 2010

1.3 Legal and administrative framework protecting women and promoting gender equality

46. In Nepal, women's participation in various stages of decision making processes was not fundamentally accepted until the 20th century. However, the government of Nepal initiated the concept of women in development in national policy since the 1980s by the 6th Five Year Plan, which adopted the policy of enhancing the efficiency of women and recognizing the role of women in development.

47. The Local Self-Governance Act, 1999 is the first act which made the provision of 20% representation of women on village and ward-level development committees. This was the first step in which women's representation was formally recognized by the government. Currently, this number stands at 25% at ward levels, and at least one position (mayor and deputy-mayor) must be filled by a woman.

[83] The Asia Foundation´s 2010 Publication "Preliminary Mapping of Gender Based Violence" provides maps with an overview of local entities providing support services. For more information refer to: https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/GBVMappingNepal.pdf

[84] This was discussed within stakeholder consultations for the gender assessment and GAP with representatives from various organizations including the Gender Focal Point of MoFE HIMAWANTI, FEDO, and Forest Action Nepal, among others.

48. The Constitution of Nepal 2015 also makes special legal provision to women in national, state and local legislatives, which secures 33% women's representation in national and state legislatives. The irrigation policy (2003) makes the legal provision of 33% representation of women in Water User Associations (WUA). Community Forest Guidelines (2015) made mandatory provision of 50% representation of women in the executive committee and guarantees that at least one major position (president or secretary) should be filled by a woman.[85] While setting such targets has greatly increased the participation of women in meetings and groups, women's participation in decision making often remains limited due to a patriarchal value system, barriers in accessing education and skill training, and time-poverty, among other factors.[86]

49. The Legal Code (the *Muluki Ain*) 1845 is the main document regarding the partition of ancestral property. This act was not free from bias against women until 2014. In that year, the government passed a bill making amendments to the legal code, giving equal inheritance rights to daughters and sons on parental property regardless of their marital status. While this marks a major advancement for women's rights on parental property, it is often not practiced in reality.

50. The issue of gender equality has been greatly strengthened within Nepalese policy since the adoption of the Interim Constitution in 2007 and the promulgated 2015 constitution.[87] The interim constitution from 2007 made several gender-friendly provisions and socially inclusive laws, including guaranteeing the rights of Nepalese women to freedom, equality and social justice. It further prohibited the discrimination of people on the basis of gender and banned violence against women, amongst other major milestones that strengthened human rights in the country. In sum, there are three dimensions of social inclusion in government policies and plans: i) access to resources, services and opportunities, ii) empowerment, identity assertions and capacity building, and iii) planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation based on policies, laws, values and structures.

51. Since then, policies across sectors have increasingly included provisions designed to empower women and promote gender equality through improving access to sector resources and engagement in official fora at the national, provincial and local levels. For instance, in 2008 the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) adopted an official Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy. The MoFSC GESI strategy aims of to assist government, non-government, donor and private sector bodies working in the forestry sector to institutionalize gender and social inclusion within their organizations, projects and programs. Furthermore, the strategy aims to guide all organizations working in the forestry sector to be responsive and inclusive through identifying and addressing four key thematic areas including: i) GESI sensitive policies and strategies, ii) good governance and inclusive institutional development, iii) GESI-sensitive budgeting, programming and monitoring, and iv) equitable access to resources and benefits. MoFSC´s guideline has helped mainstream GESI in the forestry sector through the promotion and implementation of gender-sensitive and –responsive policy at the national, regional and local level. Nonetheless, the implementation of GESI in community forestry at the local level in practice is still challenging due to poor linkage between policy and its implementation in the field due to institutional and socio-cultural barriers.

52. At the international level, Nepal is a signatory to various conventions that aim to support the empowerment of women and gender equality in general. Nepal is a signatory member of the

85 Guideline of Community Forestry Development Program 2015

86 Adhikary et al. 2017; Lama et al. 2017; Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management 2017

87 UN Women 2016

Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Beijing Platform for Action (BpfA), among others. Nepal is further committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), of which goal number 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.[88]

53. In conclusion, Nepal is continuously strengthening its legal framework to increasingly promote women's empowerment and gender equality. However, awareness, implementation and enforcement of gender-specific provisions in the legal framework are often not fully realized, especially in rural areas. Furthermore, despite having clear targets to ensure the engagement of women, the persistence of a patriarchal value system continues to limit the scope of the participation and contribution of women to user groups and other public fora.[89] Trainings are needed to build capacities on SNRM, climate change and DRR, to build adaptive capacities of the most vulnerable communities, and to build leadership skills so that women can take on key leadership and decision making roles within such platforms and/or decision making bodies. Champions are further needed to help support women in taking on new roles and building their leadership capacities and skills.[90]

1.4 Gender issues in building a resilient Churia region in Nepal

Link between Climate Change and Unsustainable Land Use and Gender in the project area

54. Men and women living in the BRCRN project area are highly dependent on natural resources to maintain their livelihoods. Agriculture is the main form of employment in the area, for both commercial and subsistence purposes. Forests are important for communities as a source of timber for their houses and for energy consumption; fuelwood remains the main source of energy in the Churia region and cow dung in the Terai. Forests also provide local people with NTFPs including plants for fodder, medicinal plants, food and other products, as well as other key ecological and cultural services. Forests in the Terai have been largely cleared, and thus many of the people living in the Terai source timber and NTFPs from forests in the Churia hills and Bhavar regions.

55. Women and men in the BRCRN project area have cited various causes of degradation and deforestation in the Churia hills and Bhavar region, including: illegal harvesting, landslides and uncontrolled livestock grazing, among others. These drivers have had differing impacts on men and women. Women are especially vulnerable to the impacts of unsustainable resource management due to the nature of their responsibilities, including both paid and unpaid labor. For example, forest quantity, quality and accessibility has a major impact on fodder and firewood availability. Women in the project area reported that walking distances to collect firewood and fodder have increased, along with decline of fodder, grasses and firewood. For instance, women in the Bakraha River watershed of Morang reported that they used to collect a load of dried firewood within 5-10 minutes over the last 10 years, but now the same task takes them over than 3 hours. In the Mahuli community of Saptari, women reported that it takes about 4 hours to collect a load of ground grasses from the forest, however the same task took less than 2.5 hours in the past. The collection of NTFPs has also been limited due to over-harvesting, degradation and changes in climatic

88 For more information refer to: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5
89 Lama et al. 2017; Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management 2017
90 Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management 2017

conditions, ultimately leading to declining incomes. The degradation of agricultural soils also leads to productivity losses, which can jeopardize food security and family nutrition.

56. Deforestation and land degradation can increase the risk of natural disasters, erosion and other negative environmental impacts, which can create further challenges for local men and women to sustain their livelihoods. Inhabitants of the project area are exposed to extreme heat, water scarcity, wildfires, landslides and flooding, among other trends. Climate change is expected to result in increasing temperatures during the dry season and precipitation in the monsoon season, increasing exposure to the aforementioned hazards. Unsustainable natural resource management further exacerbates the impacts and exposure to climate change (Figure 9).

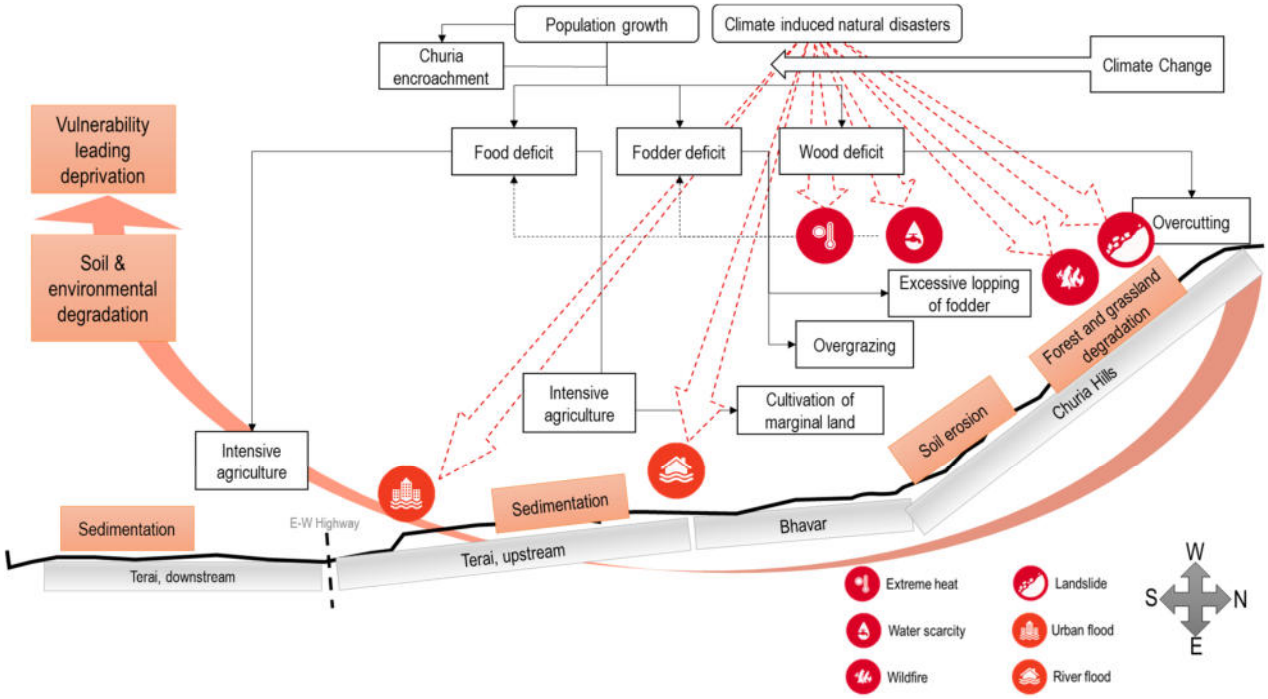

Figure 9: Overall illustration of the vulnerability of the project region with multiple climate and human induced disasters in view of climate change causing cascading impacts

57. Climate change further poses a major risk to the livelihoods of women and men living in the BRCRN project area. Inhabitants have noted changes in temperature, increased uncertainty of rainfall patterns, and the drying-up of seasonal springs, among other changes. Unsustainable natural resource management (NRM) will exacerbate climate risks and impacts, having major impacts on the overall food, energy and water security of communities living in the region. Many provinces do not have DRR plans, and thus are often ill-prepared and vulnerable to natural disasters. Often those living in the most vulnerable ´at-risk´ areas (especially in zones that are highly susceptible to flash flooding and landslides), are poor and marginalized communities, with low adaptive capacities and a high-dependence on natural resources to maintain their livelihoods. Gender-based violence (domestic violence and sexual violence) often increases following natural disasters, especially affecting displaced and highly vulnerable women.[91]

[91] UNDP 2013; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies 2015

58. Ground water recharge has greatly declined in many communities in the BRCRN project area, where many communities have noticed the depletion of such resources. Such a trend has major impacts on the water, food security and income of many communities. Women are more vulnerable to such trends, as women are responsible for the collection of water. While seasonal changes in water availability is not new to the region, the decline of rainfall combined with ground water depletion is making women and girls travel longer distances for its collection. For girls, this means there is a higher chance they will need to miss school to collect water, whereas for women, it leads to increased time poverty, where women in the Churia Terai-Madhesh region may work up to 12-13 hours a day.[92] Women in migrant households (where household members have migrated elsewhere for work), single-mothers, divorced women and widows are more likely to suffer from time poverty.

59. While women and men living in the BRCRN project area are vulnerable to the impacts of unsustainable natural resource use and climate change, women, especially women from marginalized minority communities, are even more vulnerable. Women comprise 51% of the 3.2 million inhabitants of the BRCRN project area, of which 77% are from marginalized/ excluded groups.[93]

60. Four core barriers were identified that women face in adopting sustainable land use practices (Table 1):
    - Gender gap in access to resources and land
    - Gap in mainstreaming gender into climate change and land use planning processes and policies, and raising awareness on topics related to GESI,
    - Gender and social inclusion gaps in education, skills and leadership, and
    - Gender gap in disproportionate roles and responsibilities in households and communities.

Gender gap in access to resources and land

61. A major takeaway from a discussion with women working in the field of women's rights and other women in the Churia area was that the patriarchal values system is seen as rooted in a society. This is perceived as the main obstacle for women to their empowerment and restricts their access to resources (financial, physical, administrative, etc.). Such barriers ultimately limit the participation of women in SNRM, climate change and in decision making processes. Some women in the consultations noted that their husbands were not supportive of them attending trainings on alternative livelihood opportunities, which greatly limited the participation of women in such trainings. One participant noted that many men believe that "*training is not for women, but for men*", highlighting that women are still marginalized in the Churia and Terai region, and that gender-sensitization is needed for both men and women. Extension services also need to be made more "gender-friendly", including mainstreaming GESI into training modules, training extension staff on GESI, and hiring more women extension staff.[94] Decision making at the local level remains largely dominated by men, with limited decision making and engagement of women. CBOs are increasingly developing policies and initiatives to strengthen the engagement of women, however it is an ongoing process that it not without its challenges.

[92] USAID 2016
[93] Including: Indigenous Peoples 31%, Terai-Madhesi caste 28%, Dalits 13% and Muslims 5%, among others; CBS 2014.
[94] World Bank and FAO 2018

Table 1: Overview of challenges for engaging women in sustainable natural resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation

Root causes	Gender gap in access to resources and land due to a patriarchal value system that is reinforced through cultural and legal measures.	Poor awareness, implementation and enforcement of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) and policy and legislation. Policy gaps in promoting climate change, DRR, and gender-sensitive development, especially in local land use planning practices.	Gender and social inclusion gap in education, skills and leadership.	Traditional gendered distribution of roles and responsibilities in the household which affects women and girls disproportionately.
Causes	Unequal access, control over and management of land, which limits womens' ability to invest in appropriate measures to improve the resilience of communities through SNRM, climate-smart agriculture and DRR measures. Limited access to technical assistance programs/ livelihood support programs and formal credit means many women cannot register businesses. Marginalized minority groups and women within them, including indigenous peoples, Dalits among others, may experience additional barriers due to inter-generational discrimination. While policies and initiatives are increasingly promoting their inclusion, they are still considered marginalized groups.	Low participation in technical trainings and limited bargaining power in decision making processes related to user groups, including measures to strengthen climate change adaptation and mitigation and DRR. Minimal consideration of SNRM and climate change in land use planning. Marginalized minority groups including indigenous peoples, Dalits among others, may experience additional barriers due to inter-generational discrimination. While policies and initiatives are increasingly promoting their inclusion, they are still considered marginalized groups.	In general, women and girls´ education is lower priority, which limits their ability to learn and become engaged on topics such as SNRM, climate change and DRR. Girls are regularly taken out of school to support with the collection of water, fodder and fuelwood, especially in absentee households. This limits their ability to learn and become engaged on topics such as SNRM, climate change and DRR. Ethnic minorities and other groups of disadvantaged women face further barriers in accessing education. In some instances, the knowledge of Nepali language is a barrier for some people, especially women and marginalized minority groups living in the Terai. Time poverty is a major barrier which limits women and girls to participate in education and skill training opportunities. Women and girls in the BRCRN project area experience time poverty, which is exacerbated by current migration trends where around a quarter of households have absentee household members. Majority of migrants are male, leaving women and girls in charge of not only their previous tasks but also those of their absentee household members. Single-mothers, divorced women, and widows are also often experiencing time poverty.	Many women experience time poverty, and thus have limited time to even maintain past land use activities, let alone invest in new practices. This further limits women´s availability to attend capacity building trainings, or participate in user group meetings.
PROBLEM STATEMENT: Women in the Eastern Churia and Terai region are vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change, and face food, water and energy insecurity which is further exacerbated through unstainable natural resource use in the region.				

Immediate effect	Limited awareness and uptake or gender-sensitive SNRM95 and climate change adaptation and mitigation, and DRR practices. Unsustainable natural resource management (NRM), leading to land and natural resource degradation Subsistence farming / low productivity and food insecurity	Limited awareness and uptake of gender-sensitive SNRM practices, climate-resilient agriculture, soil conservation and DRR measures. Unsustainable NRM leading to land and natural resource degradation High vulnerability to climate change Marginalization risk and weak mainstreaming of GESI Elite capture in resource management decisions, Low agricultural yields Low participation of women, esp. poor women and ethnic minorities, in decision making fora	Limited awareness and uptake of gender-sensitive SNRM practices, climate change adaptation and mitigation and DRR measures. Land and natural resource degradation Low agricultural yields, food insecurity Low participation of women, esp. poor women and ethnic minorities, in trainings and decision making Marginalization and domestic violence risk	Limited awareness and uptake or gender-sensitive SNRM and climate change adaptation and mitigation, and DRR practices. Time poverty for women to be exacerbated by unsustainable NRM and climate change. Unsustainable use of natural resource, high vulnerability to climate change Low agricultural yields, food insecurity Land and natural resource degradation
Effect	Low adaptive capacities Increased carbon emissions Low incomes, informal work and limited social security Food, water and energy insecurity Loss of biodiversity Vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change	Low adaptive capacities Low incomes, informal work and limited social security Food, water and energy insecurity Loss of Agro-biodiversity Increased carbon emissions Vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change	Low adaptive capacities Low incomes and informal work Food, water and energy insecurity Vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change	Food, water and energy insecurity Increased work burden for women and girls Low adaptive capacities Low incomes Health problems (stress, malnutrition, physical exhaustion etc.) Vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change

95 Gender-sensitive sustainable natural resource management focuses on sustainable natural resource management (that balances environment, economy and social elements), whilst considering the potential contribution of women and men to societal changes, as well as methods and tools that can be used to: promote gender equity, reduce gender disparities, and measure the impact of natural resource management and climate change on men and women.

Gender-sensitive SNRM is at the core of the project´s approach. It aims to:

1. Apply best practices in SNRM for the positive discrimination and engagement of women of all backgrounds, including Dalit women, indigenous women and others. Best practices have been identified based on past project experiences and lessons learned from FAO, the Government of Nepal and other institutions/ organizations, as well as through stakeholder consultations, targeted workshops, and through expert interviews (a list of consultations and meetings is provided in ESMF Annex 3)
2. Awareness raising and GESI sensitization are cross-cutting throughout project activities. More targeted interventions are described in the GAP.
3. A gender-responsive M&E framework for the project and GAP have been designed to actively monitor the project´s impact on men and women, ensuring active management and enabling learning on the impacts of SNRM and climate change on men and women

62. Many people residing in the Churia region do not have secure land tenure96 and only ~25% of women have land entitlements in the Churia region.97 They have been residing and cultivating *ailani* land (non-registered) for decades. Few women in the Eastern Churia and Terai region hold formal land titles. Those who have access to formal land titles have often received land as an inheritance or gift (*daijo*) from their parents, especially in households without sons, or through the purchase of land in the name of wives by absentee husbands who are working abroad.[98]

63. Lack of secure access to land and tenure security and the limited control over land use decisions and resources limit women's ability to adapt to climate change, implement sustainable natural resource management, and ultimately to improve their livelihoods. Women noted that without statutory property rights that they cannot access loans to support value adding processes, form businesses or invest in sustainable or improved land use practices (e.g. improved plant varieties, animal breeds, etc.).[99] Tenure insecurity prevents women from making medium- to long-term investments in more sustainable and improved practices. It is clear that incentives need to be provided to both men and women to support women's empowerment and gender equality.

64. Despite these challenges, some programs have found ways to develop incentives that encourage men to support women, including Dalits and indigenous peoples, to access trainings, and support women's empowerment in decision making processes and in the formal access of resources and land In Nepal, the government initiated tax exemption in land registration for women since the Fiscal Year 2008/09. In 2016, they provided a discount of 25-50% in the cost of land registration for women. Daughters and granddaughters now receive 50% tax discounts in land registration, which is 35% for a single woman (especially widows), and 25% for other women.[100]

65. CBOs have emerged as a key institution for promote collective action, enabling: improved information sharing, promoting time saving activities and pooling resources,[101] increased access to capacity building and extension, strengthened negotiation power, improved access to technology, and access to finance, among other benefits. On their own, many households, especially women-headed households and landless households, may not be financially and technically ready/ able to adopt climate-resilient SNRM due to the lack of capacities, awareness and finance. CBOs thus can help them to pool their resources and overcome many of these barriers. As described above, many organized user groups have increasingly developed GESI policies, e.g. including mandatory minimum participation quotas of women, and promoting proportional representation of marginalized groups and equitable benefit

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[96] During consultations with local communities in Kudunabari & Danabari of the Kankai River Watershed, Kerabari of Bakraha River Watershed and Bishnupaduka and Baghakhola of the Pathanli River Watershed, they reported that they did not have an official land certificate, although they have been living there for more than three decades.

[97] CBS 2012

[98] Field consultations in the project area (conducted from December 21-28, 2017)

[99] Demetriades & Esplan 2010

[100] USAID 2016; MoF 2016

[101] Consulted communities often discussed the positive environmental, social and economic benefits from joint investments, including the alleviation of time-poverty. For example, several communities discussed that community water ponds have extremely positive benefits, reducing time poverty for women (less time collecting fuelwood, NTFPs, etc.), and increasing participation of girls in school (before they often had to walk several hours in the dry season to collect water). Additional health benefits, including reduction in waterborne diseases, were also identified.

sharing. CFUGs also increasingly involve and support landless and poor households, giving such groups an opportunity to benefit from the sustainable management of community-managed natural resources.[102] CFUGs dedicate at least 35% of their funds to pro-poor programs, supporting highly vulnerable and excluded households within the CFUG. Thus, such local community-based user groups, especially CFUGs, represent an important entry-point for promoting gender equitable and inclusive climate-resilient SNRM.

66. The project will also improve the access and ownership of natural resources through investments in "Public Land Forest User Groups", which will be primarily composed of marginalized households. Management plans for all CBOs will be developed in a participatory manner with such user groups, combined with ongoing technical support.

Gaps in mainstreaming gender in climate change policy and land use planning practices

67. While Nepal´s legal framework related to gender has become strengthened in recent years, there is poor awareness of key policies related to gender, and implementation and enforcement of policies tend to lag behind, especially in rural areas.[103] Policies also may not be fully implemented at the local level. For instance, in CFUGs there is a legal requirement that at least 50% of the members are women, and at least one woman must sit on the decision making committee (i.e. either president or secretary). Many people consulted in rural communities highlighted the challenges of operationalizing such policies, and noted that many women in the committee attend the meetings but do not fully participate. This is due to a myriad of factors linked to education, time poverty, patriarchal values system, inability to participate in trainings, among other reasons. Studies have found CFUGs with higher representation of women on executive committees may create an enabling environment for women´s participation (speaking up at meetings, attendance at meetings and participation in executive committees),[104] noting the importance of supporting women to develop leadership skills.

68. Gender-mainstreaming in climate policies remains limited in the country.[105] Climate change has different impacts on women and men, where women are particularly vulnerable in the BRCRN project region. Nonetheless, many policies do not take into account differing dynamics and the impacts on men and women, and many policies are not designed in a gender-sensitive or gender-responsive manner, ensuring the engagement of women on topics that are critical for their livelihoods. This goes beyond simply policies, and also manifests in land use planning at the local level, where women are largely excluded from planning processes in general. Women are greatly involved in the management of forest and agricultural resources, with in-depth knowledge about their utilization and status, however they have yet to be fully engaged in decision making and planning processes in many user groups and communities. Gender must be mainstreamed into climate change and DRR policies, as well as in land use planning processes at the local level, to ensure that a gender-sensitive and –responsive approach is adopted with the potential to address the specific

[102] Regmi et al. 2015
[103] UN Women 2016 ; USAID 2016 ; Adhikary 2017
[104] Agrawal 2010 ; Leone 2013 ; FAO and RECOFT 2015
[105] Adhikary 2017

vulnerabilities and necessities of women and men, taking into account differing dynamics and impacts.

69. Nepal is currently undergoing a political transition from a constitutional monarchy to a federal democratic republic, involving major restructuring of local level institutions – including the establishment of seven provinces and the devolution of power over natural resource management to the local level. At the local level, there are the mayor and deputy-mayor, as well as 5 elected members (one chairperson, two women –of which one position is reserved for Dalits- and two others) from each ward, who are each elected for five years.

70. The Constitution of Nepal (2015) and Local Government Operational Act (LGOA, 2017) state that municipalities shall make necessary rules under its defined domains or jurisdictions to operate the given responsibilities and to regulate its procedure. However, while these rules shall be under the domains of municipalities, they must be consistent with provincial and national laws. Thus, the LGOA indicates that local government can effectively implement climate change mainstreaming into local plans, including GESI, and build institutional capacities through the elaboration of operational guidelines, procedures and criteria. Given the diverse impacts of climate change across sectors (including agriculture, health, etc.), there is a need for a holistic and coordinated approach for climate change adaptation and mitigation.[106] Single institutions (in this case, the local government) cannot fight against climate change without effective coordination with diverse line agencies, as well as with provincial and national governments.

Gender and social inclusion gap in education, skills and leadership

71. Women's participation in formal decision making bodies, but also trainings, schools and other learning platforms has been relatively limited due to numerous reasons discussed in more detail within previous sections (e.g. time poverty, socio-cultural barriers, among others). The lack of engagement of women on educational topics related to SNRM, climate change and DRR means that a major segment of the population, which is particularly vulnerable to climate risks, cannot access knowledge and learning opportunities. This ultimately creates a major gap in adaptive capacities and awareness of SRNM, climate change and risk-reduction practices. Further gaps are noticeable among women of different groups. Women from ethnic minorities, widows and other disadvantaged women experience greater inequality and additional barriers to participate in such trainings or knowledge sharing platforms. In some communities in the Terai it was noted that some community members, especially women and marginalized minority groups, may have limited knowledge of the Nepali language.[107] Thus, such groups of women often have lower adaptive capacities.

72. Many communities consulted noted that while people may understand that the climate is changing, people are largely unaware of risk reduction measures. However, some communities are piloting their own adaptation measures based on their own observations of the changing climate. For example, the Lepach people in the Mechi River watershed noted

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[106] Paudel 2013

[107] For instance, in Rampatti village, a settlement of Terai origin people of the Balan River System, we began to discuss with them in Nepali language. Most of the women present in the consultation could not understand Nepali. Upon realizing this we held the discussion in local language which facilitated their participation. Thus it is important to also have local people who are able to disseminate information and support local capacity building and extension in such communities. Such language-related challenges are more common in the Terai than in hill origin ethnic groups.

that they have begun to grow *akabare khorsani* (a local variety of chili), and oranges at higher altitudes, which has only become possible due to changing climatic patterns. Such experiences with local knowledge and the piloting of local solutions are key to strengthening adaptive capacities and reducing the vulnerability of communities to climate change. However there is currently no effective knowledge hub or network which allows communities to share local knowledge, nor access information about climate change, DRR, or SNRM within the BRCRN project area. While substantial measures have been piloted, there is a major gap in disseminating lessons learned, best practices and other key experiences to communities.

73. Measures are needed to encourage the full engagement of women in knowledge platforms, especially at the local and provincial levels, and strengthen the capacities of women on SNRM, climate change and disaster risk reduction. Women and girls´ education is not prioritized, meaning that many women may not have the capacity to take on formal leadership roles or to participate in technical trainings. Extension services need to be made more ´gender-friendly´ and accessible to women,[108] Trainings on SNRM, climate change and DRR need to ensure that they are targeted for women given their educational backgrounds and typical land use responsibilities and activities, and that they also further promote skill building on topics related to education, decision making and leadership. Such trainings need to be designed in an inclusive manner, ensuring the engagement of women from different groups (e.g. ethnic backgrounds, ages, marital status, etc.). It is further important that local resource persons and trainers include women and people who are familiar with the cultural and local language, to facilitate information dissemination and ensure the full engagement of women and other marginalized minority groups. The accessibility of trainings for women needs to be improved, as women will often not travel long-distances to attend a training. Gender-sensitization of men and women also should be further strengthened, noting the benefits associated with training women.

Gender gap in terms of disproportionate roles and responsibilities in households and communities

74. Women in the Churia and Terai region are often faced with time-poverty, where women are working up to 13 hours a day, taking care of their household and livelihoods, considering both paid and unpaid labor.[109] Men tend to be in charge of cash crops, commercialization of agricultural and forest products and staple cereal crops, whereas women are often involved in crops for household subsistence, livestock, the collection of NTFPs, fuelwood, fodder, grasses and water. Women are further responsible for the maintenance of the household (cleaning, cooking, caring for the elderly, among other tasks), in addition to supporting the aforementioned tasks. As the Churia and Terai regions are experiencing strong migration patterns of men to urban areas or foreign countries, women´s time poverty is becoming more critical, as women are taking on additional responsibilities while not being fully empowered to make decisions on their own.

75. Thus, in addition to the other barriers previously discussed, time poverty, compounded by lack of confidence and lower levels of literacy, is a major barrier to engage women in trainings

[108] World Bank and FAO 2018
[109] USAID 2016

on SNRM or climate change, as many women may not have the time to participate in trainings, user group meetings, etc. Women have little awareness of time-saving land use practices, and limited access to time-saving technologies.

76. Also, for women to adopt improved land use practices, often it may require more time, especially if they include new practices. Limited awareness and knowledge may result in additional time needed to pilot such practices, however limited time availability may negatively impact the adoption of such practices. Again, such a barrier may be even greater for women from more marginalized communities, where financial and time poverty limit their engagement in potential trainings, practices and other activities. Support is needed to improve the awareness and adoption of time-saving SNRM practices and technologies that not only promote low-carbon and climate resilient development, but also provide social, environmental and economic benefits to women, whilst also reducing time poverty. This includes providing technical and financial support in an accessible and culturally-appropriate, gender equitable and socially inclusive manner.

1.5 Gender Assessment Recommendations

77. The gender assessment has provided insight into gender challenges in Nepal, zooming in on the specific context of the BRCRN project area, beneficiaries and interventions. The assessment has combined the recollection of information from diverse studies and literature as well as with stakeholder consultations on gender in Kathmandu as well as in the project area. The findings of this analysis have been described in the sections above, and have helped identify opportunities and challenges to empower women and promote gender-equality in the BRCRN project. The results from this assessment will help form the basis of the GAP, where clear and feasible recommendations will be integrated into the plan to ensure that the project empowers women and helps to overcome gender-specific barriers through the promotion of gender-sensitive measures and a gender-responsive M&E framework.

Summary of Recommendations from Stakeholder Consultations

78. Stakeholder consultations during project development were designed to engage diverse actors, where gender was viewed as a cross-cutting topic. Women's organizations, including organizations for indigenous women and ethnic minorities, were engaged early on to provide insight into the gender-specific challenges faced in the BRCRN project area as well as feedback into the proposed project activities to strengthen gender empowerment and equality. Meetings have been conducted both at the national level with key stakeholders in the capital (including FEDO, NIWF, HIMAWANTI, Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN), Federation of Community Forestry Users, among others), as well as with women in the project area (see ESMF Appendix 3 for meeting summaries and attendance sheets). Key issues highlighted by the consultations include:

- Gender needs to be better mainstreamed into climate change and local land use planning at the local level, where women's knowledge needs to be taken into consideration and their voices considered in decision making and land use planning processes
- Many women, especially Dalit women, don´t have access to formal property rights or land use rights, despite their key role in managing the agricultural land, primarily due to

a patriarchal value system. This is a major barrier for women to invest in long term SNRM as it is extremely difficult for women to access credit, trainings and additional support without formal land tenure. Community-based user groups can support women to develop skills, manage natural resources and develop business models, as there are provisions to support landless families and poor households within user group guidelines and policies. Additional measures could focus on improving business literacy and incentivizing women to form cooperatives or women's groups to help access finance and develop sustainable businesses on topics related to climate-resilient value chains.

- Access and quality of forest and water resources is negatively impacted by climate change and unsustainable NRM. Villagers noted that the time needed to collect resources (water, firewood, fodder, NTFPs, etc.) is increasing, ultimately increasing time poverty for women and girls, and limiting educational opportunities for girls.
- Women´s participation in decision making is often limited, although this depends on the community. There is a need for additional training to support women to take on leadership roles and to raise awareness and capacities on climate change and sustainable natural resource management. It was mentioned that awareness raising should not only be targeted at women but also girls to help them develop capacities at a young age.
- Gender-sensitive trainings are not only needed for women, but also for men to encourage men/ boys to encourage women to become empowered and take on leadership roles and to build their capacities.
- Engagement of boys and girls in schools on topics related to climate change and SNRM, but also on topics related to gender. Schools represent an important platform to engage the youth.
- There is a need for targeted support to help women develop skills related to alternate livelihoods, business development and income generating activities to strengthen their income and livelihoods. Support is needed along entire value chains (not just production/ harvesting, but also business administration, marketing and commercialization). Additional support is required to help strengthen women´s income and improve their livelihoods.

79. A gender-specific workshop in Kathmandu was conducted on February 21, 2018 to validate the gender assessment and receive early feedback on the proposed gender action plan. Stakeholder comments from the workshop have been integrated into the final version of this assessment and the GAP. In general the GAP was well received, noting the importance of providing targeted measures for women within the project, and ensuring that differentiated vulnerabilities and contexts are taken into account. The Gender Action Plan was presented at the BRCRN Validation workshop on March 25, 2018, where the project was validated by diverse stakeholders from the public sector, CSOs and private sector.

Recommendations for Project Design and Implementation

80. The BRCRN project aims to enhance the climate resilience of ecosystems and vulnerable men and women in the Churia region through integrated sustainable rural development and natural resource management approaches. It is recommended that the project design takes into account the following recommendations to help overcome existing gender gaps, while promoting gender-sensitive and equitable development:

81. **Promote membership in CBOs, and empower women to actively participate and take on leadership roles, and strengthen access to and control over resources**

- Work with community-based organizations (CBOs) as a main beneficiary for the project, as they are a proven model in Nepal for social engagement and empowerment, and sustainable natural resource management (see Feasibility Study for additional information).
- Disseminate information on benefits for women associated with CBOs, include (a more comprehensive list of the social, environmental and economic benefits is provided in the Feasibility study):
  - Improve environmental conditions to reduce exposure to extreme weather events and hazards, improve agricultural productivity (reduced land degradation), and improve biodiversity and seasonal water availability. This will also contribute to strengthened resilience to climate change, especially for rural vulnerable and excluded men and women. Reduced vulnerability to extreme weather events and hazards can also reduce the vulnerability to gender-based violence, which often increases with natural hazards (taking advantage of hazard-affected women).[110]
  - Enhance opportunities for social empowerment and political engagement through CBO management structures (targets for membership and participation in plenary meetings, and mandatory.[111]
  - Alleviate time poverty by supporting an improved natural resource base (e.g. time spent collecting grasses, fodder, NTFPs, firewood, and water), and through promoting collective action and pooling of resources.112 CBOs can also help women access gender-sensitive technical assistance, knowledge and credit.[113]
  - Improve access to technical assistance, finance/ credit, market information and knowledge
  - Support measures to increase incomes of the rural poor, women and Dalits[114]
  - Provide targeted livelihood support for vulnerable households from CBOs pro-poor programs[115]
- Advocate for an approach that promotes gender equality and is socially inclusive, taking into account the differentiated vulnerability of women and men from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Women should make up at least 50% of project

[110] World Health Organization 2005; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies 2015

[111] E.g. CFUGs require 50% membership of women, and have further provisions related to ensure women occupy leadership positions. Studies have shown that social inclusion and empowerment should still be improved in CBOs, with recommendations to promote leadership and GESI (see following recommendations).

[112] One case study found that women saved 2.5 hours a day by joining a CFUG and reducing the collection time for various forest products. They also found that cash-incomes rose by 24% in a 3 year period. FAO and IFAD 2015

[113] IFAD 2001 in FAO

[114] FERN 2015; FAO and IFAD 2015. Recommendations from stakeholder consultations noted the importance of the following measures for Dalit women: disaster risk reduction, climate change and food security support (technical support, capacity development, financial support), education and capacity development, economic empowerment and access to resources, leadership training, and increasing access to government services (including extension services).

[115] Many CBOs, including CFUGs, require that at least 35% of the CBO´s funds are used for pro-poor programs targeting vulnerable households.

beneficiaries,[116] with proportional participation of indigenous peoples, Dalits and other excluded and/or marginalized groups.[117]

- Strengthen access to and control over resources through the establishment of public land forest user groups, especially engaging and empowering marginalized households, including Dalit women and landless women, and implement trainings to build skills along key value chains (esp. those with high potential to support women), including improved production practices, trainings on climate change, SNRM and DRR, and trainings on business literacy, including trainings targeted towards women and women's groups. USAID and IFAD have successfully implemented business literacy trainings in the Churia, which have further been mainstreamed into Nepal´s Emission´s Reduction Program for the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. Public land forest user groups will help improve access to land and control over resources for vulnerable, excluded and marginalized households.

82. **Mainstream GESI in policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks, and strengthen institutional and individual capacities on GESI**

- Ensure all project management staff and project partners (including extension agents are trained on GESI in the context of the BRCRN project. This will include training on gender-responsive and –sensitive planning, M&E and mainstreaming GESI into land use planning and local policies.
- Institutionalize gender-responsive measures and social Inclusion in the forest and agricultural sector by ensuring that the processes, policies and activities are sensitive to gender-considerations, are socially inclusive and take into consideration potential social and environmental impacts.
- Develop a strategy and action plan to promote mainstreaming of climate resilient land use planning into river-system and local planning processes, ensuring that GESI considerations are mainstreamed, including the link between GESI and climate change.
- Strengthen the institutional capacities of local community based organizations/ users groups to sustainably plan and manage their resources, as well as to integrate GESI into planning processes and empower women members, including indigenous women, Dalit women and other marginalized minority groups, within these organizations. In trainings and workshops, information should be provided on complementary government services and initiatives, including, for example, the Government´s hotline to report gender-based violence incidences, among other GESI initiatives.

83. **Build the capacity of women, especially Dalit women, indigenous women and women from vulnerable and/or excluded households, and enable them to fully benefit from project activities**

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[116] The 50% participation of women target was selected for the following reasons:
Nepal´s CFUG guidelines state that 50% of CFUG members should be women
Women make up over 50% of the population in the project area. Women are active members of organized groups, and stakeholder consultations with women's groups, CBOs, government officials, and other institutions found the 50% target to be a realistic and suitable target for the project.

[117] In terms of targets, the project aims to have 50% of the beneficiaries within CBOs as women. Proportional representation of Dalits and IPs is also encouraged, however the specific targets will be established during the FPIC process. While in the project area IPs form 31% of the population and Dalits 13%, there are substantial differences between districts, and also geographically in the Churia hills and Terai. Thus, for now "proportional representation" is applied, however once the specific CBOs and locations are selected, specific targets will be set.

- Adopt strategies and incentives to target the full participation and engagement of women, ensuring the inclusion of women from indigenous groups, Dalits, and other *´excluded´*/ marginalized groups.
- Conduct leadership trainings for men and women in user groups, with a focus on how to promote leadership that enables GESI – ultimately empowering women, including indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities and other marginalized or historically excluded groups. The trainings also aim to identify and build capacities of *´champions´* and local resource persons within user groups, communities, civil society and government to advocate for the engagement of women in decision making processes, and to actively support the empowerment and capacity building of women, including landless women, indigenous women, Dalit women, among others, to take on leadership roles and become increasingly engaged in SNRM, climate change adaptation and mitigation and DRR.[118] Encourage women to actively participate in CBO plenary meetings and executive committees to place women's-issues on the agenda, including key issues such as time-poverty.
- Improve extension services including providing tailored extension services to female farmers. Improve access to extension services and training, mainstream GESI in training modules, train trainers and extension agents on GESI (including key issues such as time poverty and the identification of time saving activities), and hire more female extension agents (including Dalit and indigenous women, among others).
- Trainings designed explicitly to strengthen participation of women in decision making, land use planning, SNRM, DRR, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and income-generating activities along key value chains. Such trainings should:
  - Ensure the utilization of different learning tools, taking into consideration that many women may not have as much formal education as men.[119] User-friendly extension picture books could be utilized, along with videos, manuals and guidelines, among other approaches (refer to the Feasibility Study for more detailed information).
  - Mainstream GESI into training modules and materials (considering time-poverty, women's roles and responsibilities, and other gender-considerations)
  - Train extension staff and trainers on GESI.
  - Improve the accessibility of women to trainings, including local trainings, transportation, and coordination with CBOs and women on suitable training times.
  - Hire and train female extension staff, including indigenous and Dalit women
  - Support the sensitization of men and women on gender issues, including raising awareness about the importance of training and educating women. This should highlight that training and educating women represents a key strategy to build the capacity of communities in the long-term.[120]
- Support the elaboration of guidelines and consolidation of practices on climate-resilient land use practices, ensuring that local knowledge and women's priorities and experiences are taken into consideration for the elaboration of such guidelines (mainstreaming GESI into training modules). Ensure that key information is disseminated to women. This should further build on the existing work of local

[118] FERN 2015; FAO and IFAD 2015.
[119] E.g. they may have limited supporting knowledge, are more likely to be illiterate
[120] Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (2017)

organizations, including women's groups, to ensure that women are aware of climate change risks and practices to reduce risks and improve their adaptive capacities (see the following recommendation on communication and knowledge dissemination).

84. **Improve communication and knowledge dissemination**

- Improve knowledge sharing and data collection on climate change, NRM and DRR in the BRCRN project area through the establishment of a climate knowledge center (CKC). Ensure the integration of knowledge from diverse groups of people, including women, ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples and marginalized groups. Promote the use of traditional knowledge (see IPPF for more detailed information). Ensure local resource persons who manage the Churia knowledge center include women, indigenous peoples, Dalit and other marginalized minority groups. Women should be engaged in the monitoring, analysis and dissemination of key data and information.
- Knowledge dissemination should take into consideration the variation in literacy rates, where certain groups of women within the project area, especially Terai-Dalits and Muslims, have literacy rates below the national average. Thus, it is important to engage local resource persons and trainers with a strong understanding of local communities and cultures, and ensuring trainings are available in local languages and in a variety of formats (i.e. not only written documents).
- Ensure regular communication between CBOs and supporting entities (government, civil society) to ensure that continuous support and communication channels are maintained. Awareness raising and information dissemination on such practices should clearly communicate to women additional benefits to adopting such activities (e.g. improved health, education, reduced time-poverty, water/energy/food security, among other factors).
- Develop and coordinate partnerships and collaborative mechanisms amongst governments, civil society organizations, and private sector and donor partners to respond to GESI needs in the land use sector and climate change aspects, including knowledge sharing, trainings, implementation support, etc.

85. **Enable participatory processes and ensure flexibility to identify suitable activities**

- Implement activities that improve the food, water and energy security of communities, that are jeopardized under current business as usual (BAU) practices in the context of unsustainable NRM and climate change.
- Ensure the flexibility for CBOs and their members to decide what activities they want to adopt: The project´s approach of promoting a ´menu´ of SNRM activities is a positive approach, which allows CBOs and their members to select the most suitable activities for their context (priorities, resources, time availability, etc.). Extension agents, informative materials and training modules should communicate potential risks associated with technologies and practices, as well as gender-implications. If a potential activity could exacerbate time-poverty it should be clearly communicated, and discussed how this can be mitigated (creating clear plans with responsibilities for various people in the household, pooling resources and responsibilities with other CBO members, etc.).
- Provide targeted technical and financial support to promote the adoption of measures to increase the resilience of local communities to climate change, and/or that will mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. The project should especially promote time-saving

practices and technologies (related to GESI mainstreaming in training modules, and training extension trainers on GESI). This should include measures such as (see Appendix 1 for more detailed information on the gender benefits, challenges and targeted measures):

- Climate-resilient agriculture practices, such as reduced impact tillage, improved varieties, organic inputs, among other activities.121 Livestock activities including integrating fodder production in cropping systems, agroforestry systems with fodder, and improved housing may alleviate time poverty, whereas other activities including intensive stall feeding could increase time poverty if clear roles and responsibilities of women and other household members are not discussed. It is thus important that extension agents are trained in GESI, and that GESI issues are mainstreamed into training materials and guidelines. In addition, to the greatest extent possible, extension agents and project staff will look to pool resources, promote discussions on sharing responsibilities between men and women (using culturally appropriate approaches), and identify potential ways to promote cooperation and collective action within CBOs to reduce time-poverty.
- Promotion of biogas, which can reduce fuelwood collection by women and alleviate time poverty, in addition to other benefits (see Feasibility study for more detailed information)
- Restoration and sustainable management of degraded natural forests, critical river systems and wetlands to avoid emissions to restore forest quality and improve the provision of key ecosystem services
- Tree planting on private, public and community lands to reduce pressure on natural forests for fuelwood, timber and forage. If activities such as free grazing will be limited, sustainable alternatives that are accessible to all beneficiaries should be established, based on a participatory and inclusive decision making process.
- On-farm planting of fodder, fuelwood and food-producing tree and grass species to reduce time spent by women in off-farm fodder collection.

86.**Safeguard the rights of vulnerable and excluded groups**

- Ensure that vulnerable and excluded groups are not ´taken advantage of´. Participation in the project is voluntary and based on the principles of free, prior and informed consent (the project´s ESMF provides a detailed description of the FPIC process). It is further recommended to:
  - Clearly communicate the rights of beneficiaries throughout project implementation
  - Hire project gender and safeguard specialists to oversee project monitoring and address related issues/ concerns and complaints

121 For a full-list of activities please refer to the feasibility study and project funding proposal. Compared to the baseline scenario in Nepal, many conservation agriculture practices can be time saving and provide additional benefits to women, such as increased productivity, diversified income streams, improved soil fertility and reduced erosion, among others. E.g. FAO 2015

- Designate local resource persons within communities, including men and women from different socio-cultural backgrounds to support information dissemination and improve communication
- Support leadership training and capacity developing, whilst ensuring the participation of women, including indigenous and Dalit women, landless women, poor women, among others.
- Conduct GESI training for all project staff and partners.
- Where necessary, ensure information is disseminated using local languages and culturally appropriate formats
- Utilize a gender-responsive M&E framework to support active management, regular monitoring and improved learning (including gender disaggregated data)

▪ Ensure the gender redress mechanism is known, accessed and trusted by women, including indigenous and Dalit women, as well as women from other excluded or marginalized groups. The project´s grievance redress mechanism has been designed to ensure that no individual or group are financially impacted by making a grievance or a complaint (see the project´s ESMF for a more detailed description of the grievance redress mechanism).

▪ Communicate and distribute Information regarding the project´s grievance mechanism to all stakeholders via :
  - The inception workshops for the BRCRN project at the national and provincial levels
  - FPIC meetings
  - Information sessions and community meetings, including the provision of information both orally and through hard copies
  - Brochures regarding the projects grievance redress mechanism (produced in Nepali and local languages) will also be distributed to diverse stakeholders, including local and provincial CSOs (including FEDO, NEFIN and NIWF, as well as other organizations representing Dalit people, indigenous people, and other stakeholders).
  - FAO Nepal Webpage, and
  - Included as part of any other communication material that is designed and distributed during project implementation.

87. **Develop a Gender-Responsive and Socially Inclusive Monitoring and Evaluation System**

▪ Design a gender-responsive M&E system to monitor the impacts from the project on women, and to support the achievement and monitoring of gender-specific targets. Include the collection of gender disaggregated data, including quantitative and qualitative data.

▪ Develop a gender action plan, based on stakeholder input, to help overcome gender-barriers, empower women and to strengthen the adaptive capacity of men and women. The GAP should include detailed indicators to monitor the implementation of gender-related measures within the BRCRN project, which will be integrated into the project´s M&E.

▪ Within the PMSU, the project´s gender and safeguards specialists will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, ensuring regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The gender officer from MoFE will serve as the gender focal

point within the Project Steering Committee, and will provide support as needed for the implementation of the GAP. They will maintain close communication with the monitoring and reporting specialist and the national project director.

- A baseline to support the monitoring and evaluation of the proposed project will be established, which will be designed in a gender-responsive manner, ensuring that gender-specific and disaggregated statistics are included within the M&E framework.

2 GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

88. This Gender Action Plan (GAP) has been elaborated to mainstream gender-related measures into the BRCRN, ensuring that gender-related risks are avoided or mitigated, and to maximize climate and development co-benefits. It pays special attention to women, considering that women are not a homogenous group, and the additional challenges that women from indigenous nationalities, Dalit caste and other marginalized groups may face. It further has identified gender-performance indicators and sex-disaggregated targets to be integrated into the project´s gender-responsive results framework.

89. This GAP is informed by the Gender Assessment conducted for the BRCRN project, available literature on gender-assessments of related projects and activities in the Churia region of Nepal, interviews with key experts and stakeholders working on gender empowerment in the Churia region of Nepal, and stakeholder consultations with local communities, community-based organizations and local women's groups in the proposed project area. In addition, a gender workshop was held in Kathmandu on February 21, 2018 to discuss and validate the results of the gender assessment and GAP. Feedback from this workshop and from other stakeholder consultations has been integrated into this document. Meeting minutes and attendance sheets for the consultations are available in Annex 3 of the project´s ESMF.

Table 2. Gender Action Plan for the ´*Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal*´ ProjectGender Action Plan												Costs	
												Exclusively dedicated for GAP	Included in Project Activities
Project Activity	**GAP Activity**	**Indicator**	**Targets**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Year 6**	**Year 7**	**Responsibility**		
Project component 1 – Scaling up climate-resilient sustainable natural resources management (SNRM) **Expected contribution of gender activities to results under the component:** Component 1 focuses on implementing and scaling up of climate-resilient SNRM practices to increase the resilience of ecosystems and local households within 26 climate vulnerable river systems. Gender activities under this component will ensure that (i) women from diverse social-cultural background (including indigenous women's groups and Dalit women's groups, among others) duly participate in the Project activities (trainings, Farmer Fileld Schools, implementation of climate resilient SNRM practices) benefit from them; and (ii) the climate-resilient SNRM practices (sustainable land use, climate resilient agriculture, restoration and sustainable management of forests, watersheds and wetlands, etc.) are gender inclusive and gender sensitive, ensuring women's role, capacity and leadership; improving their access and right (to information, to land) and that the practices take due consideration of specific challenges women face in the Churia region such as time poverty and domestic violence. As the ultimate aim of Component 1 is to increase resilience of local households, increasing resilience of women is critical and the Project tackles this through women's participation, capacity and leadership to build their own resilience, resilience of their family and community.														
PMC	Ensure training and engagement of women in adopting climate-resilient land use practices. Time and locate trainings taking into account women's work schedules and accessibility to ensure maximum participation and outreach, coordinate with local women's organizations to build on existing networks and best practices for outreach	Percentage of women extension staff and women beneficiaries participate in training and are able to access extension services	At least 50% of beneficiaries are women* At least 50 % extension staff are women*								PMU M&R specialist in cooperation with women's organizations/ CSOs	87,312	87,312
1.1.1-1.13	Women adopt and benefit from climate-resilient agricultural practices.	Number of CBOs and CBO Beneficiaries adopt climate-resilient agricultural practices	At least 250 CBOs 50% of beneficiaries are women*								PMU M&R specialist in cooperation with women's organizations/ CSOs	1,463,760	2,927,520
1.2.1-1.2.2	Women adopt and benefit from restoration and sustainable management of degraded natural forests, critical watersheds and wetlands to avoid emissions, enhance sequestration and improve other ecosystem services (incl. biodiversity conservation).	Areas of land (ha), and number of CBOs with restoration activities implemented	206,227 ha at least 750 CBOs at least 50% of beneficiaries will be women*								PMU M&R specialist in cooperation with women's organizations/ CSOs	2,143,804	4,287,608
1.3.2	Women benefit from tree planting on private and public lands to release pressure on natural forests for fuelwood, timber and forage	Number of forests owned by women registered by local government Percentage of public forests registered by women user groups*	At least 50 private forests owned by women registered At least 100 public land forests registered, of which 50% are established								PMU M&R specialist in cooperation with women's organizations/ CSOs	5,608	11,215,633

Table 2. Gender Action Plan for the ´*Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal*´ ProjectGender Action Plan													Costs	
													Exclusively dedicated for GAP	Included in Project Activities
Project Activity	**GAP Activity**	**Indicator**	**Targets**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Year 6**	**Year 7**	**Responsibility**			
		Areas (ha) plantation forests established and percentage of beneficiaries are women*	by women user groups* 24,958 ha of plantation forests established, where at least 50% of beneficiaries are women*											
Project Component 2 – Strengthening institutions and planning for climate-resilient SNRM **Expected contrition of gender activities to results under the component:** Component 2 is designed as a precursor for the investments in Component 1, and will support the necessary planning for interventions within each of the 26 targeted river systems while equipping government officials and CBO members with the capacities to understand and apply climate-resilient land use. Gender activities will ensure that capacity (in the form of assigned gender focal point) exists within the institutional structure to mainstream gender in the planning process, development of strategies and action plans and in awareness raising and building capacity on climate-resilient SNRM and agriculture at all level, from federal to CBOs and for multi-stakeholders. Ultimately, the Project will raise awareness on gender related drivers of climate vulnerability and risk and build capacities to integrate this knowledge in strategies and plans for climate change adaptation and mitigation including through partipcation of the women's organizations.												

Table 2. Gender Action Plan for the ´*Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal*´ ProjectGender Action Plan																																												Costs	
																																												Exclusively dedicated for GAP	Included in Project Activities
Project Activity	**GAP Activity**	**Indicator**	**Targets**	**Year 1**				**Year 2**				**Year 3**				**Year 4**				**Year 5**				**Year 6**				**Year 7**				**Responsibility**		
	working with existing SNRM projects and / or those who are interested in introducing SNRM and DRR practices as ´*champions*´	identified as champions for SNRM	Female beneficiaries as champions for SNRM identified for activity 2.2 and Outputs 1 and 3 (exact number will be determined upon identification of Project beneficiaries)																													Officer with support from representatives from women's organizations/ CSOs		
2.1.2	Provincial climate-resilient land use planning strategies and river-system level action plans include a sub-section on gender	Gender included in the climate-resilient land use planning strategies and river-system level action plans	3 provincial strategies and 26 action plans include sub-section on gender																													PMU M&R specialist	5,500	54,998
2.2.2	Strengthen outreach to women, including women from indigenous nationalities and marginalized groups.	Number of Project trainings targeted for women*	10 trainings on leadership, rights, climate risks and climate-resilient land use planning targeted for women																													PMU M&R specialist	6,420	374,500
2.2.2	Mainstreaming adaptation and mitigation measures at the community level, with a focus on forests, water and land management practices/ operation guidelines through active participation of women, indigenous peoples and marginalized groups;	Level of participation of women, indigenous peoples and marginalized groups in Project training on adaptation and mitigation measures	At least 50% of participants of trainings for 750 community based management organization are women*																													PMU M&R specialist	187,250	374,500
Project Component 3 – Improving knowledge, awaress and local capacity for climate-resilient SNRM **Expected contribution from gender activities to results under the component:** Component 3 aims to establish a systematic knowledge and information sharing and monitoring mechanism concerning climate-resilient SNRM: The Churia Knowledge Centre (CKC). CKC will serve as a comprehensive resource including a database of natural resources – including soil, water, ecosystems and forests – to support informed policy-/decision-making and planning, and knowledge-sharing mechanisms. The CKC will play a crucial role in enabling local stakeholders to continue delivering (and even scale up) climate-informed extension services to farmers and other land users after project closure, and in areas in Provinces 1, 2 and 3 that are beyond the Project Area. Within this aim, gender activities will ensure the respect to and documentation of local knowledge, including from women from indigenous nationalities, Dalit caste, and other marginalized groups, the engagement of women groups and women networks in knowledge consolidation and dissemination and monitoring and evaluation as well as the inclusion of gender-specific initiatives. Capacity building to ensure the appropriate number of local women trainers and resource perrsons will be vital for sustainaing the gender sensitive approach in climate-resilient SNRM in Churia.																																													
3.1.1	Respect and document local knowledge from women, including women from indigenous nationalities, Dalit caste, and other marginalized groups	Number of women's organizations invited to Project workshops	Women organizations invited to at least 6 provincial consultation workshops and validation workshops																													PMU M&R specialist	4,815	142,711

Table 2. Gender Action Plan for the ´*Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal*´ ProjectGender Action Plan																																		Costs	
																																		Exclusively dedicated for GAP	Included in Project Activities
Project Activity	**GAP Activity**	**Indicator**	**Targets**	**Year 1**				**Year 2**				**Year 3**				**Year 4**				**Year 5**				**Year 6**				**Year 7**				**Responsibility**		
3.1.1	Respect and document local knowledge from women, including women from indigenous nationalities, Dalit caste, and other marginalized groups	Percentage of women participants including women from indigenous nationalities, Dalit caste and other marginalized groups in Project consultations	At least 50% of people consulted in Project 78 community consultations (~3 per river system) should be women*																													PMU M&R specialist in cooperation with women's organizations/ CSOs	69,550	142,711
3.1.2	User group associations as well as women's groups, indigenous peoples, Dalits, marginalized minority organizations engaged in info documentation, and dissemination (networks). Women's networks support awareness raising campaigns to engage women.	Number of broadcasts regarding Churia Conservation related news and views, with engagement/support of women's groups and women's networks	125 broadcasts including broadcasts in local languages disseminated																													PMU M&R specialist	346,145	346,145
3.2.2	Trainers trained on GESI within the context of the BRCRN project, and measures to improve the engagement of women, indigenous peoples and marginalized groups in knowledge consolidation, dissemination and extension.	Trainings on GESI include measures to improve the engagement of women indigenous peoples and marginalized groups Availability of translation services for trainings or consultations in local languages.	At least 80% of Project trainings on GESI 100% local (CBOs and CBO Beneficiaries) trainings and consultations are in local languages.																													PMU M&R specialist	22,727	227,268
3.1.2	Support establishment of 130 eco-clubs, with participation from boys and girls to become engaged on topics related to climate change and climate-resilient land use	Number of eco-clubs established and percentage of girls participation	130 eco-clubs established, with 50% girls																													PMU M&R specialist	80,250	160,500
3.2.2	Trainers should include people from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, and translation services should be available for trainings or consultations in local languages.	Number of trainers as women and from diverse socio-cultural background	At least 50% of trainers should be women*																													PMU M&R specialist	113,634	227,268
3.2.1	Training modules and guidelines for extension	Number of training modules include sub-	10 training modules																													PMU M&R specialist	20,330	95,765

Table 2. Gender Action Plan for the ´*Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal*´ ProjectGender Action Plan																																Costs	
																																Exclusively dedicated for GAP	Included in Project Activities
Project Activity	**GAP Activity**	**Indicator**	**Targets**	**Year 1**				**Year 2**				**Year 3**				**Year 4**				**Year 5**				**Year 6**				**Year 7**				**Responsibility**		
	and technical assistance to be designed taking into account GESI. Extension modules each include a section on i) gender and ii) social inclusion	sections on i) gender and ii) social inclusion																															
3.1.2	Exposure visits for trainers and government staff include participation of women	Number of women in visits for trainers and government staff	50% of beneficiaries should be women*																													PMU M&R specialist	7,244	14,488
3.2.3	Engagement of women in the design and operation of the Churia Knowledge Center	Number of Women's organizations invited to workshops on the CKC	Women organizations participate in at least 3 CKC workshops																													PMU M&R specialist	10,700	88,275
3.2.3	Engage women in monitoring and knowledge management activities	Percentage of women engaged in the monitoring of environmental and social characteristics in the BRCRN project area	At least 50% of resource persons trained are women*																													PMU M&R specialist	8,828	88,275
3.2.3	Integrate information on GESI into CKC knowledge, and communicate gender-related issues linked to climate change and unsustainable natural resource management	Availability of GESI materials	GESI portal established within online CKC, and GESI materials available in regional hubs																													PMU M&R specialist	8,828	88,275
3.2.3	Engage youth, boys and girls, in learning opportunities related to climate change, SNRM, and DRR through the Churia Knowledge Center	Number of eco-clubs in schools receiving learning opportunities and percentage of girls participation	CKC presented to 130 eco-clubs in schools, with 50% participation of girls in clubs																													PMU M&R specialist	16,050	160,500
3.1.2	Raise awareness of women in vulnerable communities about climate-induced disasters and risks and the link with unsustainable NRM, as well as SNRM, DRR measures	Number of awareness raising events for community women	At least one awareness raising event specifically targeting community women in each of the 26 vulnerable river systems																													PMU M&R specialist in cooperation with women's organizations/ CSOs	175,266	175,266
2.1.3	Engage women including indigenous peoples and marginalized groups in the development of provincial DRR plans.	Number of workshops for provincial DRR plans with women's	3 consultation workshops and 3 validation workshops																													CSOs to support participation of women in consultation	10,700	175,266

Table 2. Gender Action Plan for the ´*Building a Resilient Churia Region in Nepal*´ ProjectGender Action Plan																																Costs	
																																Exclusively dedicated for GAP	Included in Project Activities
Project Activity	**GAP Activity**	**Indicator**	**Targets**	**Year 1**				**Year 2**				**Year 3**				**Year 4**				**Year 5**				**Year 6**				**Year 7**				**Responsibility**		
		organizations invited/participated																														workshops (awareness raising).		
2.1.3	Integrate women´s, including, indigenous peoples and marginalized minority groups, priorities´ into disaster risk management plans and guideline development through consultations with women in local-community based organizations, and through engaging with local networks	Gender included in the Provincial DRR plans	Provincial DRR plan (03) includes a section on i) gender and on ii) social inclusion																													PMU M&R specialist	7,565	75,649

*promoting proportional representation of highly vulnerable groups including indigenous women (31%) and Dalits (13%)

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Gender challenges and benefits of specific project investments

In the project region, women are highly engaged in land use activities, as described in the previous chapters. The feasibility study provides a detailed description of the different activities within Component 1 (Annex 2), including the detailed actions, and benefits associated with each of the measures.

The following paragraphs summarize the gender benefits and challenges, as well as the project´s targeted measures associated with the main investments:

Farmer Field Schools

Current situation: Women are less likely to participate in FFS than men.

Expected situation: Women participate in FFS and build their capacities on climate-resilient SNRM.

Gender-benefits:

1. Strengthened capacities and awareness for implementing climate-resilient SNRM
2. Improved access to information (production information, marketing information)
3. Empowerment of women
4. Engagement of women in higher earning livelihood activities
5. Improved mainstreaming of gender-issues in extension and effective targeting of women in extension.

Gender-specific Challenges:

1. Lack of extension services tailored to women (critical due to the feminization of agriculture) – lack of access, lack of female extension workers
2. Women are often less educated than men (lack of complementary knowledge)
3. Extension services have insufficient budget to maintain a field presence, and women are often unable to travel long distances to access such services
4. Women´s productive work is not targeted by extension services
5. Time poverty

How the project addresses this:

1. Awareness raising for extension services, targeting women
2. Mainstreaming GESI in all trainings
3. Hiring and training of female extension agents, including Dalit women, indigenous women, among others
4. Training all extension workers on GESI, and key issues related to many women (e.g. time poverty)

5. Supporting extension services to extend their reach (need for capacity building)
6. Designating local resource people (men and women) to encourage women´s engagement in climate-resilient SNRM and FFS
7. Taking into account suitable times and locations for trainings, taking into account women's work schedules and accessibility to ensure maximum participation and outreach, coordinate with local women's organizations to build on existing networks and best practices for outreach
8. Respecting and documenting local knowledge from women, including women from indigenous nationalities, Dalit caste, and other marginalized groups

Climate-resilient agricultural Practices

Current situation: Men and women do not adopt climate-resilient agricultural practices. Feminization trends in the agricultural sector increase time poverty for women and has resulted in the abandonment of some areas where there was insufficient labor.

Expected situation: Men and women adopt climate-resilient agricultural practices, with multiple social, environmental and economic benefits.

Gender-benefits:

9. Strengthened capacities and awareness for implementing climate-resilient SNRM
10. Improved access to information (production information, marketing information)
11. Empowerment of women, engagement of women in higher earning activities
12. Improved resilience of ecosystems and local people to climate change (see Feasibility study)
13. Increased productivity, livelihood diversification (e.g. agroforestry), economic benefits
14. Improved supply of different products (fuelwood, fruit, NTFPs, etc.), which can substitute supplies that are over-used, degraded or critical habitat (e.g. agroforestry).

Gender-specific Challenges:

1. Challenges associated with FFS (see above)
2. Lack of awareness of climate-resilient farming best practices (including time-saving practices and activities)
3. Physical challenges (with heavy lifting, use of tools)
4. Inability to invest in inputs (seeds, materials)
5. Lack of awareness of marketing/ value adding opportunities
6. Lack of land (landless households)
7. Commercialization activities often overseen by men (esp. cattle, cash crops)
8. Time poverty could be exacerbated by some activities, especially if roles are not clearly divided between men and women

How the project addresses this:

9. Developing CBO management plans in a participatory manner for shared community resources, ensuring the active engagement of women
10. Promoting membership in CBOs to improve the management of shared resources (e.g. forests), with additional benefits (incl. time-saving benefits, e.g. reduced time spent by women and girls to collect natural resources (e.g. fuelwood, fodder, NTFPs,)
11. Improving accessibility and targeting of extension for women (see above)
12. Promoting climate-resilient SNRM (reduced tillage, etc.), with a focus on time-saving practices and activities.
13. Providing a flexible ´menu´ of climate resilient SNRM options, allowing the selection of practices that are suitable for the local context – supported by extension agents trained on GESI and best practices for climate-resilient SNRM
14. Promoting smart investments in suitable equipment (e.g. hand tools), practices and activities that can benefit CBO users
15. Establishing public land forest user groups that improve access to. and use of land for highly vulnerable and marginalized households
16. Implementing gender sensitization training for men and women in CBOs, including information on time poverty (sharing roles and responsibilities)
17. Mainstreaming GESIin all training modules and FFS, all project staff and partners trained on GESI
18. Designating local resource people (men and women) to encourage women´s engagement in climate-resilient SNRM and FFS
19. Ensuring that the time and location of trainings consider women's work schedules and accessibility to ensure maximum participation and outreach, coordinate with local women's organizations to build on existing networks and best practices for outreach
20. Respecting and documenting local knowledge from women, including women from indigenous nationalities, Dalit caste, and other marginalized groups
21. Raising awareness on climate-induced disasters and risks and the link with unsustainable NRM, as well as SNRM, DRR measures

Restoration, maintenance and sustainable management of natural forest ecosystems

Current situation: Deforestation and forest degradation is accelerating in natural forest ecosystems.

Expected situation: Forest ecosystems are better maintained and protected resulting in reduced emissions from degradation and deforestation and increased resilience to climate change. Women adopt and benefit from restoration and sustainable management of degraded natural forests, critical watersheds and wetlands to avoid emissions, enhance sequestration and improve other ecosystem services (incl. biodiversity conservation).

Gender-benefits:

22. Strengthened capacities and awareness for implementing climate-resilient SNRM
23. Improved access to information (production information, marketing information)

24. Empowerment of women
25. Engagement of women in higher earning activities

Gender-specific Challenges:

26. Challenges associated with FFS (see above)
27. Lack of awareness of climate change and lack of information on alternative land use systems: Lack of alternative sources of forest products, lack of alternative livestock systems
28. Inability to invest in inputs (seeds, materials, fencing)
29. Lack of land (landless households)
30. Insufficient tree nurseries to support restoration needs (in highly degraded areas)
31. Time poverty

How the project addresses this:

32. Developing CBO management plans in a participatory manner for shared community resources, ensuring the active engagement of women
33. Promoting membership in CBOs to improve the management of shared resources (e.g. forests), with additional benefits (incl. time-saving benefits, e.g. reduced time spent by women and girls to collect natural resources (e.g. fuelwood, fodder, NTFPs,)
34. Promoting climate-resilient SNRM (reduced tillage, etc.), with a focus on time-saving practices and activities.
35. Providing a flexible ´menu´ of climate resilient SNRM options, allowing the selection of practices that are suitable for the local context – supported by extension agents trained on GESI and best practices for climate-resilient SNRM
36. Improving accessibility and targeting of extension for women (see above)
37. Promoting smart investments in suitable equipment (e.g. hand tools), practices and activities that can benefit CBO users
38. Establishing public land forest user groups that improve access to. and use of land for highly vulnerable and marginalized households
39. Implementing gender sensitization training for men and women in CBOs, including information on time poverty (sharing roles and responsibilities)
40. Mainstreaming GESI in all training modules and FFS, all project staff and partners trained on GESI
41. Designating local resource people (men and women) to encourage women´s engagement in climate-resilient SNRM and FFS
42. Ensuring that the time and location of trainings consider women's work schedules and accessibility to ensure maximum participation and outreach, coordinate with local women's organizations to build on existing networks and best practices for outreach
43. Respecting and documenting local knowledge from women, including women from indigenous nationalities, Dalit caste, and other marginalized groups

44. Raising awareness on climate-induced disasters and risks and the link with unsustainable NRM, as well as SNRM, DRR measures

Establishment and operation of multi-purpose tree nurseries

Current situation: Insufficient nurseries (in terms of production and quality) to support forest restoration, and other forest sector investments in woodlots, agroforestry, horticulture

Expected situation: Establishment and operation of multi-purpose tree nurseries.

Gender-benefits:

45. Strengthened capacities, preparation of high quality seedlings
46. Improved seed quality, yields/ promoted qualities that can in turn support men and women to reduce the reliance on forests and/or support forest restoration that in turn increases their resilience to climate change
47. Empowerment of women
48. Employment in nurseries

Gender-specific Challenges:

49. Challenges associated with FFS (see above)
50. Time poverty

How the project addresses this:

51. Hiring women in nurseries
52. Mainstreaming GESI in nursery guidelines and protocols
53. Ensuring gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation

Investments in soil and water conservation

Current situation: Many river systems, and the communities living within them, are vulnerable to climate-induced erosion, sedimentation and flooding risks.

Expected situation: Investments in soil and water conservation enhance the resilience of ecosystems and local men and women to climate-induced erosion, sedimentation and flooding risks.

Gender-benefits:

54. Strengthened capacities on climate-resilient land use planning, ecosystem-based adaptation, and soil and water conservation
55. Increased resilience to climate-induced erosion, sedimentation and flooding risks, which in turn reduces damages, safeguards land/ infrastructure, and even reduces the risk of GBV due to displacements/ damaged infrastructure associated with natural disasters and hazards

Gender-specific Challenges:

56. Challenges associated with FFS (see above)
57. Time poverty

How the project addresses this:

58. Developing river system-level action plans to improve coordination of upstream and downstream investments through participatory processes that engage women, ensuring GESI is mainstreamed in each action plan.
59. Engaging women and women's organizations in identifying vulnerable areas, critical ecosystems and integration of women's issues in sub-river system level SNRM planning; CBO management of shared resources (e.g. water conservation ponds, check dams, etc.) can reduce the burden of maintenance, labor, etc.
60. Developing provincial disaster risk reduction plans, ensuring GESI is mainstreamed
61. Applying participatory land use planning processes to develop CBO management plans, ensuring the engagement of women
62. Improving accessibility and targeting of extension for women (see above)
63. Conducting gender sensitization trainings
64. Mainstreaming GESI in all training modules and FFS,
65. Training all project staff and partners on GESI
66. Designating local resource people (men and women) to support communication, knowledge dissemination and encourage women´s engagement in climate-resilient SNRM and FFS
67. Respect and document local knowledge from women, including women from indigenous nationalities, Dalit caste, and other marginalized groups
68. Supporting awareness raising for women in vulnerable communities about climate-induced disasters and risks and the link with unsustainable NRM, as well as SNRM, DRR measures. Engage women including indigenous peoples and marginalized groups in the development of provincial DRR plan