

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

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Case Study Name:	Women and natural resource management: Illustrations from India and Nepal		
Author:	Bhawana Upadhyay		
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Region:	South Asia		
Country:	Nepal, India		
Ecosystem Type:	Tropical forest, savanna, mountain ecosystems		
Social Characteristics:	Rural community, indigenous community		
Scale of Study:	regional		
Resource Type:	Forestry, fisheries, agriculture, biodiversity conservation		
Type of Initiative:	Research driven project		
Community Based Work:	Conservation, indigenous knowledge, resource management		
Keywords:	Gender, water, forestry, organic farming, fishery, natural resources, Nepal, India		

Summary:

This article attempts to delineate women's roles in natural resource management by highlighting their roles in management of water, agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishery. The article is based on the findings of case studies in rural areas of India and Nepal done during 2003 and 2004 by the author as well as by other researchers. Taking women as primary respondents, empirical work used participatory techniques, such as in-depth surveys, focus group discussions and participant observation. Findings suggest that women clearly outdo men in terms of their involvement in use and management of all the studied sectors, i.e., water, agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishery. Yet, they face categorical exclusion and denial of equal sharing of benefits from natural resources. In order to ensure sustainable use of these resources, the article recommends that policy makers, planners and development workers must have a better understanding of the relative and often shifting roles of men and women in natural resource management, including division of labour, access to resources, decision-making and traditional knowledge and practices. The article concludes with sector-specific recommendations.