Engaging with Academia and Research Institutions (ARIs) to support Family Farmers and Food System Transformation During and Post COVID-19 Pandemic in Asia

With technical assistance from the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
Investing in food safety, nutrition & women empowerment can play a key role to accelerate agro-ecological transitions

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OUTLINE

1. Overview paper and IFAD examples

2. Nepal Asha experience on gender in community driven adaptation

3. Learning from agro-ecological stock take
Brazil experience on seed & AE logbook
Food safety & nutrition links to AE & gender

FSN closely linked to women empowerment & AE practices

Food safety, nutrition and health awareness played a key role to convince HH to adopt such agro-ecological practices (field survey India & Bangladesh)

- Chemical use
- Women led post harvest practices
- Women education
- Diverse farm systems & homegarden
- Women education, livelihoods & food production
- Resilient farms & women livelihood-asset
- Food available & access
- Food stability
- Food safety
- Nutrition diversity
Women empowerment and adoption of AE

- **Addressing gender gap is key to enable** women influence HH decision and get engaged in AE -value chain

- **Women leaders & groups can spearhead extension of AE**
  - Women agro-entrepreneurs (*i.e. APDMP case*)
  - Women lead farmers (*Nepal & India*)
  - Women networks can scale innovations (*SHG networks in India transitions to natural farming*)
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LAPA as Tools for Scaling CDD Climate Adaptation: Experience from ASHA Project in Nepal

Guided Process:
- vulnerable HHs and community
- Guiding plan: Local Adaptation Plan for Action (LAPA)

GIS mapping

Vulnerable ward

Participatory Sub-watershed assessments

Participatory scenario development

LAPA

Identified investments

CSA tested in CSV & FFS

Climate resilient Households and Community

+ Farmer diary

+ HH approach

Lessons for scale
- LAPA, 200 wards, 114,000 HH, 50% women beneficiaries
- 316,679.54 ton CO2e avoided
- Blending of local knowledge with scientific knowledge
- Local implementation: LF, groups
- Policy engagement & convergence
Inter-linkages of women, agro-ecological practices (CSA), food safety and nutrition

Role of women in nutrition
• 100% bread makers are women & concerned by nutrition and food safety
• ASHA has a goal level objective: 15% reduction in the child malnutrition compare to baseline

Strong links between nutrition, health and agro-ecology
⇒ Climate resilient, agri-livestock-forest based farming practices increase resilient food system/food stability
⇒ Improved use of bio-input & more diversified production (permaculture–agro-forestry) contribute in the nutrition diversity and food safety
⇒ Case study & field discussion says that the health and nutrition is an important argument to adopt agro-ecology
Women empowerment helps women adopt agro-ecology

>80% agriculture workers are women, and they face constraints:

- Lack/inadequate information access
- No/low paid work and income
- Low productivity of farming system
- Increased workload

**Project empowers women along GAP:**

- 48% of the project beneficiaries are women
- Involved in CSA, including kitchen gardening using no/low chemical inputs; efficient water use practices
- Dedicated investments:
  - Gender sensitive local social mobilizer;
  - 29% (429) Women Lead farmers trained and capacitated;
  - Water access & involvement in O&M;
  - Women friendly drudgery reduction agri-tool kits
  - Establishment of Permaculture and demo farms
  - Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA)/Permaculture FFS
  - Improved Cook Stoves and Improved water mills
  - Establishment/strengthening of CCA GESI network

**Impact on women adoption of agro-ecology**

- Increase information access and knowledge
- Targeted drudgery reduction activities save time
- Improved fresh water access: saves 2-3 hours labor
- Saved time: hygiene, food preparation & homegarden
- +15% production and income from CSA & homegarden
Impact on women empowerment, dissemination of agro-ecology & nutrition

• Women (LF) actively approaching government planning process to include more ASHA/government investments in agro-ecological practices etc.

• Women Lead Farmers: change agent; very dedicated; feel dignified & empowered; key for sustainability

⇒ Project’s ambition to become gender transformative
⇒ Further survey and action to connect gender, nutrition and climate resilient practices

www.asha.gov.np
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IFAD AE Stock-take: how holistic approaches to sustainable food systems benefit small-scale producers while promoting gender and nutrition

Screening 207 projects across the IFAD portfolio along an integrated AE framework
77% of production projects include AE practices

IFAD is an early adopter of gender empowerment

Nutrition is highly promoted in agroecology-related projects, through:

➢ Diversification and integration of sectors in crop-livestock-fish systems
➢ Sustainable food processing and safe storage, enhancing access to differentiated markets and innovations organizing demand and supply
➢ Community seed systems and community gardens
➢ Regulations on agrochemicals and animal drugs
Examples from the field showcasing the nexus between agroecology and biodiversity, women and nutrition: Rural Sustainable Development Project in the Semi-arid Region of Bahia

- **Agroecological Logbook** – participatory tool rendering women’s monetary and ‘non-monetary’ work in the household visible, recording production in the backyard gardens, consumption, sale, exchange and donation

- **Contribution to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, healthy diets and women empowerment**

AL Video: [https://youtu.be/cFzvTRMu0Tw](https://youtu.be/cFzvTRMu0Tw)
Community Seed Systems

- **Community Seed Banks** conserving local species adapted to the semi-arid climate, preserving genetic diversity and traditional practices

- **Seed Guardians** – mainly women, custodians of genetic and cultural heritage

- **Increased climate resilience and food security and nutrition**

CSS Video: [https://kapwi.ng/c/jsQ7CjZikH](https://kapwi.ng/c/jsQ7CjZikH)
Conclusion

• Nutrition, CC, bio-diversity and gender nexus : IFAD priorities

• ARI to further invest in analysing such nexus and its implications on how we organize & implement extension activities

  *Ex: FAO-FFS and SDHS dedicated pages / webinar on such thematic*

• Call for contributions for joint paper & webinar