



Photo: J. Turner (CCAFS)

Gender Integration for Inclusive Adaptation to Climate Risks

Encouraging women farmer participation across all stages of the project via community-based groups, and capacity building efforts have created a platform for women to improve agency, confidence and decision making at the community level while pursuing income generating opportunities.

With time, women are being entrusted with more roles and responsibilities in the agricultural sector, though the status of their authority and decision-making ability still offers immense scope for improvement. Women farmers are still not socially accepted as major contributors to the sector, while they struggle to fulfill the entrusted roles and responsibilities, in a patriarchal system. The project integrated gender concerns across all the stages of the project, starting from the planning stage itself.

Methodology and approach: The project adopted an integrated participatory approach to empower women farmers via varied activities and technologies. Throughout all stages of project ideation and implementation, conscious efforts were taken to include women farmers, not just as beneficiaries, but as active participants. All three districts are characterized by different social structures and, therefore, women's role in agriculture, as well as their level of participation in interventions, differs across the three project districts.

Betul, (tribal district) was considered as the focus district for gender related interventions, given its favourable socio-cultural conditions as well as it being a hotspot of women in agriculture and climate risks. As the first step in project implementation, a baseline assessment was carried out. It highlighted the higher involvement of men in decision-making and participation across different agricultural and livestock-related activities, compared to women. This trend was visible in the districts of Nalanda and Mathura. In Betul district, on the other hand, women were active participants in agriculture as well as livestock-related activities.

Accordingly, a diversified set of interventions were designed for women farmers, including institutional initiatives such as Village Climate Management Committees (VCMCs) and Custom Hiring Centres (CHCs), promotion of women-friendly CSA technologies and practices, training and capacity building exercises, and promotion of entrepreneurial activities.

Takeaways

- As members of VCMCs, women farmers in Betul have used the institutional platform to develop their social and leadership skills. They have facilitated support of the local Gram Panchayats in promoting climate-smart technologies in the village through the convergence process.
- Women farmers have increasingly shown interest in learning new skills and gaining knowledge. This has been evident through increased participation of women farmers during the trainings conducted.
- Members of the CHCs are providing equipment on rent to other farmers and this is enabling a regular flow of income for the group. This is not only helping them to earn an income but also developing their entrepreneurial skills while also contributing to improved agency.
- Promoting gender-inclusive techniques and machinery such as Direct Seeded Rice (DSR), biogas and weeder significantly reduce the drudgeries of women farmers, which provide them free time to engage in other income-generating activities.



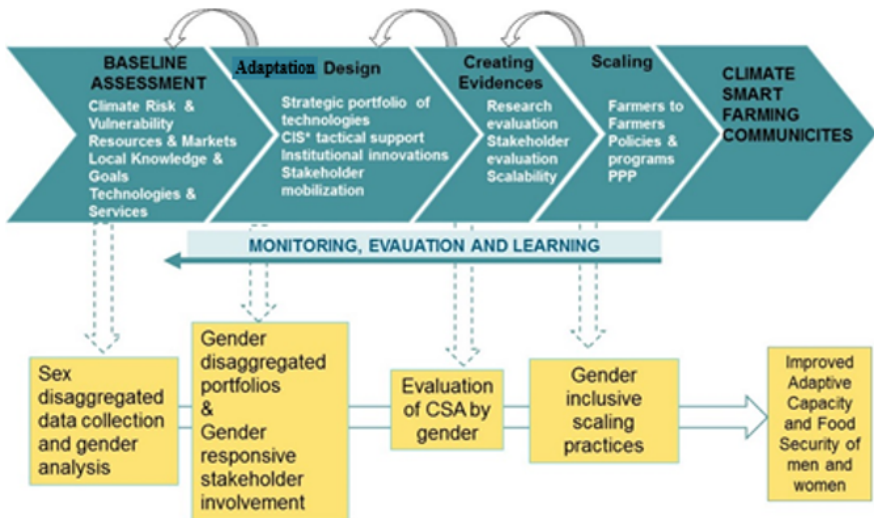
Photo: BAIF

Story from the field



Lalita Bai, a 35-year-old woman farmer from Banspur village (Betul, Madhya Pradesh) started using bio pesticides on her small plot of vegetables. After seeing the positive effects, on the crop she convinced her husband to use it at a larger scale. While doing so, she also took the initiative to cultivate tomatoes on a slightly larger area of 0.4 acre. Since her produce was completely organic, she could get a premium rate of Rs.20 per kg in the local market. Looking at the benefits of the bio-pesticides on her plot, she decided to sell these to other farmers in the village and earned income through this sale. After seeing her high interest level and keen knowledge, the local agriculture department and other farmers started to invite her to train other farmers as a paid resource person. She has managed to train 12 farmers during the project duration within her own village and aspires to teach more people in the coming years both within and outside her own village. She is now recognized as a respectable and knowledgeable person in her village when it comes to organic farming.

Process of integration



Project beneficiaries

More than 4,500 women farmers directly benefitted through the program.

A total of 318 women farmers initiated entrepreneurial activities post capacity building exercises resulting in 182 individual and group-based enterprises.

Outcomes

- Enhanced knowledge/skills and access of rural women to CSV technologies.
- Improved agency, leadership and decision making through membership in local institutions.
- Economic stability and improved social status of women farmers through incomes from CHCs, and entrepreneurial initiatives.
- Indirect benefits of improved health, nutrition and sanitation through involvement in other activities promoting such interventions.

Learn more:
<https://ccafs.cgiar.org/scaling-out-climate-smart-village-program-vulnerable-areas-indo-gangetic-plains-india#.XobzOYgzblU>

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