



Policy Review Paper

on

**Gender Mainstreaming Strategies under
OFSDP-II under JFM Resolution 2011 read
with amendment of 2015**

**Forest, Environment and Climate Change
Department, Govt. of Odisha**



Project Management Unit (PMU)
Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project, Phase-II

FOREWORD

Gender Mainstreaming is a strategic process leading towards achievement of the goal of gender equity and gender equality. As a development strategy, gender mainstreaming requires attention on various gender perspectives in relation to the achievement of development goals. In order to evaluate gender mainstreaming in developmental projects the gender mainstreaming evaluation criteria and indicators such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability need to be addressed at both project and programme level.

It is challenging to ensure the mainstreaming of women and marginalized groups in the processes of community based forest management with zero exclusion errors. However, the robust community mobilisation process and handholding of the stakeholders through policy initiatives are some of the best measures to address the challenge.

In consideration of the National Forest Policy – 1988, Government of Odisha recognised women as equal stakeholders in the forest management along with men. This has created formal measures to provide a space for women and marginalized groups to participate in forest conservation and management initiatives, including Joint Forest Management (JFM) programme. Keeping this ethos, 'Gender Mainstreaming' has been identified as one of the focus area for implementation of Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project,



Phase-II. It is being implemented with an objective to sensitise the project functionaries on several themes of Gender Mainstreaming in all components of the project and mainstream the same with the OFSDP-II Action Plan.

After the initial preparatory period of the OFSDP-II project implementation and constitution of 1231 numbers of Vana Surakshya Samitis, the Project Management Unit of OFSDP-II has now come up with a Policy Review Paper on Gender Mainstreaming Strategies under OFSDP-II under JFM Resolution 2011 read with the Resolution of 2015 of Forest, Environment and Climate Change Department, Govt. of Odisha. A review was attempted to examine the dimensions of Gender Policy vis-à-vis Gender Mainstreaming Strategies adopted by OFSDP-II in its project areas in compliance of the broad objective of participatory forest management or JFM. The Policy Review is expected to be a primary indicator of effectiveness of tools adapted to mainstream gender at policy, planning and implementation levels.

This document is expected to serve as an important reference for all stakeholders of the Project Management Unit, Divisional Management Units, and Field Management Units implementing OFSDP-II.

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The Policy Review paper on Gender Mainstreaming under Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project, Phase-II (OFSDP-II) has been formulated in the line of Project Document of OFSDP-II & the JFM Resolution, 2011 and amendment in 2015. This document will provide adequate insights to all stakeholders across the Project Divisions in implementing the project interventions following the Gender Framework.

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Policy Review Paper on Gender Mainstreaming Strategies under OFSDP-II in JFM Resolution 2011 read with amendment of 2015. Forest, Environment and Climate Change, Department of Govt. of Odisha

1. Prelude

The term 'gender mainstreaming' in the context of natural resource management and development sectors means 'inclusion of men and women stakeholders in equal terms' in the process of development and management. Specifically, it implies that though the needs and priorities of men, women and transgender stakeholders are different, they have to be given equal consideration while planning, implementation and monitoring the community development interventions. This can be made possible if the equal and active participation of men, women and transgenders is ensured in the development planning and execution, which is the crux of gender mainstreaming in development management.

The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming in social and development contexts is to attain equality and equity in terms of gender participation, contribution, resource accessibility, benefit sharing and so on while being engaged in the process of social change / development as its key-stakeholders. In the present social scenario, particularly in rural settings, the gender mainstreaming strategy would primarily involve breaking the traditional male dominance and prevailing stereotypes against women and transgenders in most spheres of family and social / community life. This can only be achieved through rigorous social and economic empowerment and building the capacity of women and transgenders

in management of livelihood support activities so that they attain the equal status and treated at par with men in all aspects of rural life. Robust social and economic institutional support system in the forms of Gram Sabha, Palli Sabha, VSS/EDC, SHG/ CIG/ PoP etc., with adequate provisions for active women participation already exist in most villages of Odisha state and particularly in all villages under OFSDP-II. However, this institutional support system has to be strengthened and made gender-responsive with genuine concern for women and transgender issues. At the same time, it should also be realized that the process of gender empowerment cannot be carried out at any level of social system without the active support of men. That is where the role of gender mainstreaming is envisaged in terms of sensitization of all genders towards their equal social responsibilities and mutually supportive functions for their own community betterment.

Gender mainstreaming is defined by the UN Economic and Social Council as a "strategy for making the concerns and experiences of all genders an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that all genders benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality" (ECOSOC, 1997). The core principle of gender mainstreaming relies



upon ensuring that the needs and priorities of all genders are taken into account while designing and decision-making on intervention strategies. Gender mainstreaming in the context of development and NRM sectors including OFSDP- II, while providing equal opportunities and access to resources (facilities, services, information, fund, benefits, natural resources, entitlements) to them, also ensures that both share control over such resources and equitable distribution of benefits.

2. Status of Gender Participation in Natural Resource management in Odisha

2.1 Status of Women's Participation

Odisha is predominantly a patriarchal society in which men have authority over women. Male preference is strong and it limits parental investments on girls, reduces girls' bargaining power & autonomy, inhibits women from getting paid employment. Poor and rural women mainly engaged as the workforce in agriculture and in the informal economy where their work is invisible. Women's income in the informal economy is low and insecure and often the work is difficult and carried out in unfavorable working conditions. The situation for transgenders is much worse and practically non-existent.

Access to and control over income and other productive assets such as savings and property are critical for women's empowerment. Many laws and policies Govt. of Odisha are favorable for rural women. They mandate equal wages for men and women in most types of works, including

those related to forest management. In addition, many social entrepreneurship programs are being implemented through women's self-help groups (SHGs) to close the gender gap in the process of socio-economic development. Due to proactive policies and legislations like reservation policy, legal provisions in Panchayati Raj system etc., an enabling and empowering environment for gender equity has been created in the state. Women are better represented in local institutions like Gram Sabha, Palli Sabha, VSS, SHGs etc., in which up to 50 percent of seats are reserved for women. Also, women, particularly SHG members in large numbers are not only attending, but increasingly participating in the meetings and activities of Gram Sabha and VSS. Women centric issues and practical gender needs are becoming points of deliberation in these meetings.

Compared to men, rural women are more closely associated with use of natural resources. Women are observed to have more knowledge of trees, forests, bio-diversity and its sustainable management and conservation practices. However, despite having gender positive policy support from the state government, women in villages still have to be more empowered in terms of access to and control over natural resources. Policy interventions ought to have better impact on the field to effectively combat the social constraints and gender inequalities to which women are commonly subjected in order to achieve sustainable natural resource management.

2.2 Status of Transgenders in Odisha^{xiii}

Issues pertaining to transgender in Odisha need to be identified and properly addressed. Non-

availability of reliable data about the demography, socio-psychological status, education and economic status, and livelihood status and opportunities of transgender has restricted the schemes for them. The issues associated with the gender identity of transgender community such as discrimination, persistence of stigma, lack of educational facilities, unemployment, lack of shelter, supportive medical facilities, problems relating to marriage, property, insecurity etc. are to be addressed sensitively.

A report on transgender reveals that around 75% of the transgender had to abandon their education before they completed their standard 10, whereas, around 20 % among them complete class XII and out of those a very few went for graduation and higher studies. Reasons for lower education level among the transgender were primarily poverty, not going or being sent to school because of social stigma attached, the study said.

Countless issues are associated with the gender identity of transgender community such as discrimination, persistence of stigma, lack of educational facilities, unemployment, lack of shelter, lack of medical facilities like HIV care and hygiene, depression, hormone pill abuse, tobacco and alcohol abuse and problems relating to marriage, property, electoral rights, adoption, alienation from family and society, absence of sensitivity, insecure life, forced sex work and begging. Social stigma includes being disempowered due to the labeling and negative generalized. The Government of India today has taken a stance and introduced several welfare policies and schemes for the transgender which would be a big step forward. These include census, documentation, issuing of the citizenship

ID Cards, issuing passports along with social, economic, political transformation, housing, legal measures, police reforms, legal and constitutional safeguards to prevent human rights violations of the transgender community and institutional mechanisms to address specific concerns of transgender people.

The Government of Odisha, in recent past has introduced series of initiatives related to several welfare policies and schemes for the transgender which would be a big step forward. Moreover, the initiatives of Government to address the livelihood and poverty issues of transgender by offering employment opportunity and scope for being engaged in different government positions, has been marked as a giant step in empowering the transgender communities to lead a dignified life with sustained source of income.

3. Dimensions of Gender Policy- A Tool to Mainstream Gender in the Society

Above all, Gender Mainstreaming (GM) is a process that requires a paradigm shift at policy, planning and implementation levels. GM policy has to shift the focus from being 'gender blind' to 'gender sensitive' in its approach. The 'gender blind' policy does not recognize the differences in the issues, needs and priorities between women, men and transgenders and does not assume that policy interventions would have differential impacts on women and men. Whereas, the 'gender sensitive' policy acknowledges the gender differences, issues and inequalities among men and women and facilitates the process of 'gender transformation' wherever



is needed. Gender transformative approach tries to change the traditional social norms on gender creates new opportunities for facilitating gender equity and equality.

3.1. Gender policy intervention for achieving gender equality and gender equity

Gender-equality refers to equality of rights, responsibilities and opportunities of all genders. However, it does not mean that they are same but emphasizes that they are not discriminated because of their gender differences. On the other hand, gender-equity refers to the outcomes or benefits derived from any policy intervention / project or program must be shared fairly between them, considering their needs, priorities, vulnerabilities, social barriers etc.

Gender equity is the means to achieve gender equality. Hence, the gender policy intervention should ensure equality of rights, responsibilities and opportunities in accessing the common / community resources and have control over them by women and men and fair distribution of benefits. The responsibility for translating gender mainstreaming into practice lies with the sound strategies drawn out of policy framework. Specifically, such GM strategy should advocate broadening women's participation at all levels of decision making.

3.2 Gender analysis enables the policy to recognize gender differences and perspectives

Gender analysis is the first step to understand and identify the gender differences in terms of the activities of different genders, their access to and

control over resources and influencing factors. It also helps in understanding the socio cultural "stereotypes" that limit the genders to fulfil their potentials by limiting their opportunities and choices that lead towards gender discrimination. Gender analysis, thus, helps in identifying the issues and disparities and also to find options of how these might be overcome. It will result in acquiring sex and gender segregated data to identify patterns and trends of inequalities, reviewing gender specific needs, opportunities and constraints, identifying challenges and opportunities for specific issues and solutions.

3.3 Gender Budgeting - important policy instrument to achieve gender equality/ equity

Gender responsive budgeting or gender-budgeting is another dimension of gender policy intervention. Gender budgeting is a tool, while taking gender differences into account, tries to integrate gender perspectives into the overall budget component of the program / project. It is one of the most important policy instruments to facilitate the change by specially allocating funds to implement programs that will change the traditional gender patterns towards a more gender-equal society.

4. Gender Mainstreaming (GM) under OFSDP-II

The main objective of gender mainstreaming under OFSDP-II is to attain gender equity in access and control over forest resources and pave way for women's economic and social empowerment through gainful livelihood interventions. Thus, the GM strategy under OFSDP-II has been designed incorporating number of gender-oriented actions such as:

- gender analysis to understand the gender specific issues, needs and priorities
- generation and utilization of gender segregated data for designing largely forest based livelihood and development interventions
- ensuring equal and effective participation of men and women in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- undertaking different income generating activities through Women SHGs, Community based organizations and Poorest of Poor families at Community level.
- facilitating the process of gender empowerment through capacity building of men and women for making best use of project interventions and achieving better standard of living.

Since information on transgenders is restricted and not forthcoming, this aspect Gender Mainstreaming is not being attempted till the time the strategy of their inclusion is not defined by the Government of Odisha.

It is important to realize that gender mainstreaming is not an isolated project component or activity, rather it is to be integrated across all the components of the project. The gender action plan, developed as a part of GM strategy will address the need for broadening participation of men and women in the decision-making process, reduce the gender-gap in accessing the information, funds, services, control over natural resources and equitable distribution of project benefits. As envisaged in the project document, gender action plan is to be formulated and implemented at all levels of the project.

The gender action plan framework for the project will be developed by PMU in consultation with DMUs and FMUs; whereas the gender action plan for each VSS is to be prepared during the microplanning exercise and incorporated in the final micro plan document. The gender mainstreaming at VSS level under OFSDP-II is largely proposed in line with the JFM resolution of Government of Odisha issued in 2011, read with its amendment in 2015.

5. Gender Participation in JFM – Policy Provisions in JFM Resolutions of Govt of Odisha

As proposed in the India's National Forest Policy in 1988, community participation in forest management has become mandatory and the policy recognizes the significance of the role of women in sustainable forest management. In the same line, Govt. of Odisha issued the JFM Resolution in 1993, 2008 and in 2011 (amended in June 2015), emphasizing the community participation in general and women participation in particular in JFM as stipulated in the National Forest Policy (1988).

The two categories of the state's forests covered under JFM Resolution are

- Reserved forests, Protected forests, Village forests, Revenue forests etc. not covered under Protected Areas.
- Protected Areas (National Park and Sanctuaries) excluding Core Areas, and Mangrove Wetlands.

In order to make the forest-people interface more effective, the Govt of Odisha issued a Resolution in 1993, leading to formation of Van Samrakshyana



Samiti (V.S.S.), enabling the involvement of all local communities in protection of the first category of forests i.e., adjoining Reserve forests and Protected forests.

The 2008 Resolution was issued to extend the participatory approach to all types of forests, including mangrove wetlands and the Protected Areas (PA) of the State (National parks and sanctuaries). Eco-development was adopted as a strategy to improve the livelihood of local people in these types of forests and thereby secure their support for conservation. The committee constituted to protect these categories of forests and implement eco-development programs in the protected areas is known as Eco-Development Committee (EDC).

There are few specific / special provisions made in these resolutions for promoting community and especially gender participation in JFM activities / governance / benefit sharing which are being almost adopted as such at the field level of implementation i.e., FMU and VSS levels under OFSDP-II.

6. Policy Provisions in the State's JFM Resolution vis-à-vis Gender mainstreaming Strategies under OFSDP-II

The Odisha State's JFM resolution 2011 aims to achieve community and gender participation in forest protection, its sustainable management, livelihood promotion and community development activities and the gender mainstreaming strategies formulated under OFSDP-II for achieving the same objectives in the project area.

The Table-1 contains the specific / special provisions made in these resolutions for promoting community and gender participation in JFM activities / governance / benefit sharing along with the corresponding measures in terms of gender mainstreaming strategies taken up under OFSDP-II in complying with the state's JFM resolution.

Table 1: Comparative Review of Odisha JFM Policy Provisions for Gender Mainstreaming Strategies to be adopted under OFSDP-II in Community Participation

S.No.	Major component of Gender participation	Provision in JFM Resolution of Odisha, 2011 with amendment in 2015	Corresponding Gender Mainstreaming measures under OFSDP-II	Compliance
1	Selection of Forest types under JFM	The two categories of the state's forests covered under JFM Resolution are as under: i. Reserved forests, Protected forests, Village forests, Revenue forests etc. not covered under Protected Areas. ii. Protected Areas (National Park and Sanctuaries) excluding Core Areas, and Mangrove Wetlands.	Under OFSDP-II, 12 Forest Divisions with the first type of forests and one Wild Life Divisions with second type of forests covered. Proper participation of men and women is ensured by the project personnel.	The JFM resolution is already applicable in these Divisions
2.	Constitution of Vana Surakshya Samiti (VSS) / Eco Development Committee (EDC)	Ordinarily there will be VSS / EDC in a village. However, one VSS may also cover more than one village or there may be more than one VSS /EDC in a village, if it is large sized. All adults of the village will be members of the VSS / EDC. They may pay an enrollment fee determined by the General Body of the VSS / EDC	1200 VSSs & 10 EDCs are covered under OFSDP-II in 12 Forest Divisions and 1 Wildlife Division and the VSS have been constituted following the JFM Guideline.	Complied as per JFM norms
3.	Institutional arrangement for people participation in forest management	In order to make the forest-people interface more effective, the Govt of Odisha issued a Resolution in 1993 along with subsequent resolutions leading to formation of Van Samrakshyana Samiti (V.S.S.), enabling the involvement of all local communities in protection of adjoining forests.	The project also envisages the formation of VSS or strengthening of existing VSS under JFM to enable the involvement of all local communities in protection of adjoining forests.	JFM resolution is complied
4.	Participatory protection of Protected Areas (PAs)	In 2008, Resolution was issued to extend the participatory approach to all types of forests, including Protected Areas (PA) of the State (National parks and sanctuaries). Eco-development was adopted as a strategy to improve the livelihood of local people in these types of forests. The committee constituted to protect these forests and implement eco-development programs in the PAs is known as Eco-Development Committee (EDC)	Participatory & Sustainable Bio-diversity Management is being implemented by using SATOYAMA model through EDCs in 10 villages of Badrama Sanctuary area in Bamra Wild Life Division. Proper participation of men and women is ensured by the project personnel.	EDCs in this sanctuary area were formed as stipulated in the JFM resolution
5	Allotment of forest area to community (VSS) for protection and management	Extent of forest area to be assigned to VSS to be decided by the Palli Sabha in consultation with the Forest Range Officer concerned, taking into account the area customarily being protected and used by the community, the number of adjacent villages, their claims, if any, and users' regime.	Allotment of forest area to VSS for protection and management as well as consolidation and demarcation of forest boundaries (under non-JFM mode) done as per JFM norms. This process is gender neutral.	Allotment of forest area to VSS for protection and management as well as consolidation and demarcation of forest boundaries (under non-JFM mode) done as per JFM norms



S.No.	Major component of Gender participation	Provision in JFM Resolution of Odisha, 2011 with amendment in 2015	Corresponding Gender Mainstreaming measures under OFSDP-II	Compliance
6	Number of VSS / EDC per village	Usually, one VSS / EDC exists in a village. However, one VSS may also cover more than one village or there may be more than one VSS in a village, if it is large sized.	The OFSDP-II covers 1200 VSSs in 12 Forest Divisions and 10 EDCs in Bamra Wild Life Division. Each VSS / EDC is serving one village.	Complied as per JFM norms
7	VSS membership	All adults in the village constitute the General Body (GB) of the VSS / EDC.	i. All adult men and women in the village are enrolled as the members of General Body (GB) of the VSS / EDC under OFSDP-II ii. As per the Baseline survey report- 2020-21 by CTRAN, women constitute 48.80 % of GB members in VSSs constituted under the project	JFM resolution is complied
8.	Constitution of Executive Committee of VSS / EDC	i. The Palli Sabha shall elect an Executive Committee (EC) of the VSS with minimum of 11 members. ii. Palli Sabha also elects the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, and the Treasurer from among the EC members. iii. At least 50% of the members of the EC shall be women. iv. The number of SC & ST members in the EC shall be in proportion to their membership in VSS / EDC. v. There should also be representation from the poorest of the poor i.e. the families which do not have any livelihood support other than depending on the forests and seasonal labor work	i. VSS General Body elects the Executive Committee members, including women members, SC & ST members and Office bearers such as Chairperson, Vice -Chairperson, Treasurer etc. ii. The Executive Committee is recognized by the Palli Sabha as a sub- committee for forest protection and conservation iii. As per the Baseline survey report- 2020-21 by CTRAN, women constitute 47.47 % of EC members in VSSs constituted under the project iv. Consideration is given to poorest of the poor families in the village to represent in the Executive Committee of the VSS	Executive Committee of all VSSs and EDCs under OFSDP-II have been constituted following the policy stipulations in JFM resolution
9.	The composition of the EC	i. The composition of the EC shall be as follows: EC members: Eleven elected members Chairperson: One elected Member Vice-Chairperson: One elected Member Secretary: Local Forest Guard / Forester (Ex-officio Member) Treasurer: One elected Member Ward Members: Ex officio Members ii. Either the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson shall be a woman iii. The concerned Range Officer shall be responsible to ensure the representation in the EC is in accordance with above stipulation. iv. The EC will have tenure of 3 years at a time.	i. The same composition of Executive Committee is followed in the VSSs formed under OFSDP-II ii. In most VSSs, the Executive Committee is composed of 11 members. In few VSSs, number of EC members slightly vary iii. As per the Baseline survey report-2020-21 by CTRAN, men occupy the Chairperson position in most of the VSSs (93.18%) and women occupied the Vice-Chairperson position in most of the VSSs (91.47%) under the project. iv. Concerned FMU Chief (Range Officer) ensures that the EC's composition is as per stipulated norms, including the proportion of women members in EC and women occupation of either Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson position	Composition of Executive Committee of most of VSSs under OFSDP-II follow the stipulated norms in JFM resolution

S.No.	Major component of Gender participation	Provision in JFM Resolution of Odisha, 2011 with amendment in 2015	Corresponding Gender Mainstreaming measures under OFSDP-II	Compliance
10.	VSS meetings - General Body (GB)	<p>i. The General Body (GB) meeting of the VSS / EDC shall be held at least once in every six months</p> <p>ii. 50% of the members of the VSS /EDC will constitute the quorum for the GB.</p> <p>iii. At least one-third of the members present should be women.</p> <p>iv. The decision in the GB meeting shall be taken by a minimum of 2/3rd members of VSS / EDC.</p>	<p>General Body meetings of VSSs under the project are conducted following the regulations mentioned in the JFM resolution</p> <p>Women working groups and focused group discussions are held to identify gender related issues and plan for them.</p>	The same norms prescribed in the State's JFM policy are applicable in OFSDP-II with respect to conducting GB meetings of VSSs
11	Executive Committee (EC) meetings	<p>i. EC would meet as often as possible and necessary, but not less than once in two months</p> <p>ii. The quorum for EC meetings shall be 50% of its membership.</p> <p>iii. Out of the quorum required, at least one-third shall be women.</p>	<p>i. Executive Committee meetings of VSSs under the project are conducted following the norms recommended in the JFM resolution</p> <p>ii. EC would meetings are conducted at least once in every month in each VSS.</p> <p>iii. The quorum for EC meetings is followed as per the JFM Resolution</p>	Norms prescribed in the JFM Guideline are duly complied with additional Monthly Meetings at EC level.
12.	Roles of Micro plan envisaging gender sensitive forest management and livelihood practices	<p>i. Following are the gender-sensitive roles of Micro plan envisaged in JFM resolution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conservation and sustainable management of forests - Gender oriented developmental activities outside the forest - Augmenting forest-based livelihood system in convergence with line departments - Formation / strengthening of SHGs and micro-enterprises that could be undertaken by women groups 	<p>i. Comprehensive Micro Plan on Conservation and sustainable management of forests & Community Development prepared in a participatory manner.</p> <p>ii. Working group and women working groups exclusively were formulated and oriented for incorporating in GAP and also to monitor its implementation.</p> <p>iii. Apart from fulfilling the roles of micro plan mentioned in the JFM resolution, the Micro plans prepared under OFSDP-II has the dedicated section to collect gender segregated data from the concerned VSS area. Gender Action Plan (GAP) drawn based on the segregated data shall also be included in the Micro plan as well as the Annual Action Plan. The GAP also includes the gender oriented developmental activities outside the forests, enabled by convergence schemes. The GAP included in the micro plan is expected to lead towards achieving Gender Mainstreaming (GM) in the respective VSS / EDC areas.</p>	The Micro plans under OFSDP-II are prepared in the way so that they comply the roles mentioned in the JFM resolution



S.No.	Major component of Gender participation	Provision in JFM Resolution of Odisha, 2011 with amendment in 2015	Corresponding Gender Mainstreaming measures under OFSDP-II	Compliance
13.	Benefit sharing among VSS members	<p>i. The VSS / EDC members are entitled following usufructuary benefits from the assigned forests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Usufructs, mostly used as fuel shall be available at free of cost. - All intermediate yields as a result of silvicultural operations and bamboo harvest. - If they are sold, the funds so obtained shall be deposited in the VSS / EDC account. - The VSS / EDC will receive 50% share of the sale price of the major / final harvest after deduction of proportionate harvesting cost. 	<p>i. The Project ensures that the policy norms prescribed in the State's JFM resolution wrt benefit (forest usufructs) sharing among VSS members are compiled by the Executive Committee (EC) of VSSs under OFSDP-II whenever the usufruct benefits are shared among VSS members.</p> <p>ii. Importantly, the EC is sensitized to maintain the principle of 'gender equity' during the usufruct benefit sharing process.</p>	JFM policy provisions to be complied whenever usufruct benefits are shared among VSS members
-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wind fallen trees in case of natural calamities shall be treated as final harvest - VSS members may opt for 50% of such harvest for their bonafide domestic use - All usufructs including interim and rotational harvests from village woodlots maintained by the VSS / EDC on non-forest land, shall go to the VSS / EDC. - Priority in distribution of usufructs shall be given to the VSS members who do not have any livelihood support other than depending on the forests. <p>ii. The Executive Committee of VSS shall be responsible for the distribution of the usufructuary benefits equitably among men and women the members of the VSS.</p>		

7. Conclusion

Over the past two decades, Odisha has made significant improvements in the livelihood status of rural community, particularly of women. Overall progress has included economic growth coupled with reduction in poverty; improvements in gender parity in all spheres of development. However, the vast majority of rural men and women, particularly belonging to forest dependent communities are employed or self-employed in low-paying, vulnerable, and unprotected work. Women's participation in the leadership positions in social institutions is low relative to men. Gender inequalities still persist in many spheres of family & social life, access to livelihood opportunities and in sharing benefits of natural resource management and development schemes.

A separate program may be initiated at the government level to first identify and establish the demographic profile of transgender population in Odisha along with highlighting the issues involved in promoting their socio- economic development. At present, these issues have not been addressed in this policy review paper.

The JFM resolution 2011 of Govt. of Odisha is a well-conceived policy instrument in line with the National Forest Policy 1988 which is being effectively put into use for achieving community participation in forest management with gender

equality and at the same time maintaining gender equity in access to benefits of JFM implementation. Adopting the same spirit of JFM as envisaged in the 2011 resolution, OFSDP-II has been implementing the project components, particularly pertaining to peoples' participation through Community Based Organizations (CBOs) like VSS, SHGs etc., and gender mainstreaming. The detailed review of policy provisions in the State's JFM resolution vis-à-vis OFSDP- II implementation strategies related to community participation with gender sensitivity in project activities, particularly in forest management, institutional activities, livelihood practices and convergence-based development interventions reveals close compatibility between both and high proximity of OFSDP's gender mainstreaming strategies to the provisions / norms spelled out in JFM resolution. In fact, the main project document- Minutes of Discussion, JICA as well as the major document on Gender Mainstreaming strategy clearly mention that both the measures of community participation and gender integration through VSS / SHGs are primarily based on the State's JFM policies. While endorsing the JFM based approach of the project, this review report emphasizes the need for strengthening the gender inclusive strategy in the project in order to attain the goal of gender equality and equity at the community level.



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