



Republika e Kosovës – Republika Kosovo – Republic of Kosovo

Qeveria – Vlada – Government

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MINISTARSTVO POLJOPRIVREDE, SUKARSTVA I RURALNOG RAZVOJA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Project: Support to Implementation of Forest Policy and Strategy in Kosovo
GCP/KOS/005/FIN

Conference on the Role of Women in Forestry in Kosovo

Summary Report
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Contents

1.Introduction..... 3
2.FAO Support 3
3.The objectives of the Conference 4
4.Programme of the Conference and highlights from presentations 4
4.Recommendations 11
Annex 1 13

Abbreviations

APFO	Association of Private Forest Owners
CNVP	Connecting Natural Values and People organization
CoC	Chamber of Commerce
FD	Forestry Department
KWN	Kosovo Women Network
KFA	Kosovo Forest Agency
MAFRD	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises

1. Introduction

Access to and control over forest resources is fundamental for the sustainable livelihoods of rural poor (for food, fuel wood, medicines, fibre, income, etc.). However, in many cultures, women do not have the same access to forest resources as men. Gender-differentiated access depends on traditions and other environmental, social and economic circumstances.

Globally, women contribute to the forestry sector in many significant ways. They play roles in agro-forestry, tree improvement, and forest protection and conservation. Forests have a great potential to provide a source of employment for women. Women often work in nurseries and plantations and in some regions they also participate in harvesting of forest products and wood processing. The role of women in forestry varies across culture and in most societies it differs from that of men. It has been observed/demonstrated in different countries that the knowledge of women about forest resources – which often differs from men’s knowledge - is indispensable for finding the most adequate management solutions, i.e. to achieve sustainable forest management.

In Kosovo, no sex-disaggregated data are available on the forest sector. The current and potential roles of women in forestry have not been investigated and/or discussed, nor has their exact level of participation been defined. Nevertheless, it is known that the forest sector is heavily male-dominated, i.e. the share of women among forest professionals is very low and women are not considered competent agents of forest sector development. Consequently, women have not been included – to a significant extent – in decision making processes over forests and the products and services they provide. Considering that gender equality is a prerequisite of sustainable natural resource management and that Government of Kosovo is committed to achieve sustainability of the forest sector, it is essential to understand and address these issues.

2. FAO Support

The overall objective of the project GCP/KOS/005/FIN “*Support to the implementation of the forest policy and strategy in Kosovo*” is to increase the contribution of the forest sector to the national economy through sustainable use of forest resources, taking into account the multipurpose forestry including the economic, social and environmental benefits as well as its contribution to climate change mitigation.

The project has three components

- (i) Institutional support for the implementation of forest policy and strategy;
- (ii) Integrated forest management and practices;
- (iii) Forest sector and climate change.

The project focuses on institutional support and involves the main stakeholders of forest sector in order to facilitate their efforts towards stronger forest administration. The key activities are facilitation, capacity building, publicizing, exchange of information and experiences.

The project also has a linkage to the field through pilot exercises in order to help upgrade forests, which are now in bad condition. At the same time, and even more importantly, the project

contributes to finding ways to employ rural families in forest improvement activities, giving a special attention to women. During a previous mission (13-17 May 2013) of the reporting Gender JTO, it was agreed (in the meetings with the stakeholders) that a joint conference and/or seminar organized jointly by FAO and MAFRD would be an adequate starting point for promoting the participation of women in the forestry sector in Kosovo.

3. The objectives of the Conference

To address gender equality in forestry sector and the benefits from inclusion of women in forest management in Kosovo, FAO project and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, on 24 of October 2013, have jointly organized a conference to discuss the role of the women in Kosovo forestry sector. On this conference, the main stakeholders of the sector participated, including, international organizations that are developing forestry projects, experts on gender issues, donors, non-governmental and civil based organization, associations and entrepreneurs in forest sector, etc (please see annex 1).

The main objectives of this conference were:

- 1. Understanding the situation of women in the forestry sector in Kosovo – identifying opportunities and obstacles of women to benefit equally from the sector**
- 2. Promote the role of women in forestry – making visible the environmental, economic and social benefits of the inclusion of women**
- 3. Produce recommendations re actions towards achieving gender equality in the forestry sector in Kosovo**

4. Programme of the Conference and highlights from presentations

The first part of the conference consisted of speeches and expert presentations as well as of presentation of case studies and field experiences from Kosovo and other countries. In the afternoon session (second part) group discussions took place, identifying the main issues of women in the forestry sector and possible tools and approaches to address these problems. The conference was moderated by Ms Peonare Caka, adviser of the minister for agriculture, forestry and rural development in Kosovo.

Below is the detailed programme of the conference, followed by summary/highlights of each technical presentation:

1. Openings and introduction to the objectives and programme of the conference

- © Ms Anne Meskanen, Charge d’Affair of the Embassy of Finland in Kosovo
- © Mr Andrew Russell UN Development Coordinator in Kosovo
- © Ms Shqipe Dema, DDP Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development in Kosovo
- © Mr Norbert Winkler-Ráthonyi, Forestry Officer, Zsófia Bossányi, Gender Officer - FAO REU Budapest

2. Gender equality in forestry and agriculture – the benefits of women’s inclusion

- © Gender Equality in Forest Sector – experience of Finland

Presentation by Mr Vesa Kaarakka, Senior Forestry Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Finland

- © Rural Women in Kosovo – Inclusion of women in agricultural and forestry activities

Presentation by Ms Merita Ramaxhiku, Officer for Gender issues MAFRD;

- © Women’s empowerment in rural development in Kosovo by UNDP

Speech by Ms Brikena Sylejmani, UNDP Kosovo, Gender Programme Associate

- © Importance of women’s role in forestry

Speech by Ms Flora Macula, UN Women office in Kosovo

3. FAO approaches on gender equality in forestry: experiences and lessons learnt in other regions

- © Presentations by Ms Lauren Flejzor, Forestry Officer and Gender Focal Point, FAO HQ

4. Best practices on gender mainstreaming in forestry programmes and women in private forestry in Kosovo

- © Presentation by Ms Sebiha Ahmeti CNVP project on support Private and Decentralized Forestry in Kosovo and Ms Blerina Hoxha Deputy of Private Forest Owners Association in Kosovo

5. Lessons learnt from the participatory development of Forest Management Plans in “Murgulle and Bellasic” in Podujevo and “Bodoshnjak” in Kacanik and Hani i Elezit

- © Lessons learnt from the participatory process, and preliminary findings from a socio-economic survey conducted in two Forest Management Units in Kosovo

Presentation by Ms Albora Kacani from Arneni Company contracted by FAO project “Support on Implementation of Forest Policy and Strategy in Kosovo”

6. Experiences of women entrepreneurs and associations in the field of forestry/agriculture – from different municipalities of Kosovo

- © Ms Mirlinda Kusari head of SHE-ERA – Women’s Business Association – 3 case studies of 3 female network members

7. Identification of opportunities and obstacles for the economic empowerment of women in the forest sector and for the inclusion of women in forest governance

- © Group Work- facilitated by FAO/Arneni and SHE-ERA

- © Presentation of recommendations by each group and formulation of work plan

8. Wrap up and drafting of recommendations for policy makers and implementers

Gender Equality in Forest Sector – experience of Finland

Presentation by Mr. Vesa Kaarakka, Senior Forestry Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Finland

The presentation consisted of 5 main parts: 1) Gender in forestry in Finland, 2) Finland’s Development Policy, 3) Gender mainstreaming 4) A case from Finnish Development Co-operation: Tanzania: Lindi and Mtwara agribusiness support 5) Conclusions/ recommendations.

Mr. Kaarakka explained that the participation of women started to increase during the Second World War and has significantly increased since the 1970s, to the extent that today 40-70% of forestry university students are female. However, high management is still male-dominated in the sector.

The development policy of Finland is human rights based and considers gender equality. Related policy guidelines for forestry urge the promotion of women's property rights, the participation of women's organizations in forestry programmes, consideration of women's specific needs in planning of forest use and women's participation in high level decision making.

Gender mainstreaming considers also men's vulnerabilities in Finland. This is very important as in some sectors they suffer disadvantages. According to Finland's forestry approaches, the gender(ed) impacts of each intervention should be assessed and a gender-sensitive monitoring is extremely important in the sector.

A case study from Tanzania showed that the Finnish Development Cooperation has successfully involved women in its programmes by providing specific training to female leaders, to promote certain agribusiness (where women could have a greater share), introducing a quota for benefiting from village bank schemes and considering women's daily occupations in timing meetings.

Rural Women in Kosovo – Inclusion of women in agricultural and forestry activities

Presentation by Ms Merita Ramaxhiku, Officer for Gender issues Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD);

The presentation of the gender officer focused on MAFRD strategic plans for developing agro-rural sector in Kosovo. She underlined that the current plan for agriculture and rural development 2010 -2013 considers cross cutting issues, such as gender, youth, environment, migration, ethnicities, in implementation of the development activities.

Ms Ramaxhiku presented the objectives and the goals of the national plan for agriculture and rural development. A set of measures for the five main objectives were also briefly explained. It was mentioned that all of these are to increase agricultural production and employment in rural development.

The gender officer has presented statistics regarding the share of female and male farmers benefiting from grants and subsidies of MAFRD. Overall, women made up only 13.5% of the total beneficiaries. The highest participation of women was in the fruit and green house sectors.

The MAFRD gender officer has concluded that in the last years rural women have been increasingly supported by the state institutions. This support mainly consisted of the encouragement of their inclusion in the decision-making processes as well as of awareness raising on the importance of women's participation in agricultural activities.

Women's empowerment in rural development in Kosovo by UNDP

Speech by Ms Brikena Sylejmani, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Kosovo, Gender Programme Associate

Initially, Ms Sylejmani expressed a high gratitude for the FAO project to organize such an important event related to gender equality in Kosovo forestry sector. Ms Sylejmani explained how UNDP Kosovo considers gender equality issues in planning and implementation of their projects. UNDP projects, in principle, pay a high attention to women's inclusion in decision making processes and to ensure a minimum share of women among final project beneficiaries.

Then, Ms Sylejmani presented a brief summary of the ongoing UNDP rural and environmental projects in Kosovo. She underlined that UNDP in 2011, through UN Global Fund for women in business, has cooperated with SHE-ERA, a women business association, to develop and improve entrepreneurial skills of rural women.

Another UNDP project supports women to start up and make viable their income generating activities in Dragash municipality. She underlined that some rural women have received greenhouses to start/improve agriculture production.

The main recommendation that Ms Sylejmani has conveyed to the participants of the Conference was: raise awareness of men on the importance of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.

Importance of women's role in forestry

Speech by Ms Flora Macula, UN Women office in Kosovo

Ms Flora Macula, Head of UN Women office in Kosovo has started her speech with emphasizing the importance for inclusion of women in activities of every sector in Kosovo, forestry sector is no exception. Ms Macula stressed the need for equal division of the roles and investing in education of women and argued that these and similar gender equality measures should be adopted by all institutions.

She expressed her appreciation to the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD), which was one of the first institutions that established the position of gender officer. She mentioned the lack of reliable gender statistics and advised participants to work more on disaggregating agricultural data in order to have a clear picture of women's contribution in "male" sectors like forestry.

Ms Macula gave an overview of the Policy and Strategy paper for Development on Forestry Sector in Kosovo. She argued that all intervention areas identified by the policy and strategy paper are highly relevant fields for both women and men. However she recommended having more activities related to forestry vocational training and education, in which women should be encouraged to participate.

Forests, Gender and FAO

Presentation by Ms Lauren Flejzor, Forestry Officer and Gender Focal Point

Ms Flejzor gave an overview of the gender approaches within the FAO Forestry Division and briefly introduced some of the best practices as well. In addition, she presented a successful FAO programme on socio-economic research in forestry. The presentation explained that the work of the forestry division towards gender equality is driven by the FAO Gender Policy, the objectives of which are the following:

1. Women to participate equally with men as decision-makers in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programs
2. Women and men have equal access to and control over decent employment and income, land and other productive resources
3. Women's work burden is reduced by 20% through improved technologies
4. Percentage of agricultural aid committed to gender-equality related projects is increased to 30%.

The presentation also highlighted that the FAO Forestry contributes to achieving these objectives through project work:

1. Mountains and watersheds (Pakistan and West Africa)
2. Small and medium forest enterprises (SMFE) (Burkina Faso and Cameroon)
3. Food security, including through NWFPs (FFF and FFSN)
4. NAMORFA projects (Tanzania)

In addition it aims to reduce gender biases in its publications and information products, and is currently working to mainstream gender in its new Strategic Framework.

The NAFORMA project was presented as a case (successful) for socio-economic study in forestry. It collected essential data on resource access in sex-disaggregated manner. However, aspects for improvement were identified: the need for interviewing spouses, intra-household disaggregation, and gender balance among interviewers (ideally both female and male interviewers in each household).

Best practices for gender aspect development within forest programs and inclusion of women in private forestry

Presentation by Ms Sebiha Ahmeti CNVP project and Blerina Hoxha Deputy of Private Forest Owners Association

The presentation gave a detailed explanation about the history the National Association of Private Forest Owners (NAPFO), which is supported from Connecting Natural Values and People (CNVP) Programme. It was highlighted that thanks to this support a “women’s sector” was established within the association, which enhances women’s participation in decision making processes. In addition, CNVP has made other efforts to promote gender equality with forestry, such as a study into women’s involvement in forestry. The experiences of the project and the results of the study concluded that the following points are essential to empower the role of women in the forestry sector in Kosovo:

- Advocacy to regulate the tax system for small and medium enterprises and/ or producers’ groups
- Promotion and exchange of successful models
- Promotion of organic products and access to market all levels
- Providing market information
- Support to creation of groups of women and inclusion of women in existing groups
- Strengthening political actions related to increase of stimulation measures as are: EU funds, schemes of Government subsidies, payment for environment protection etc.
- Participation of women in preparation of management plans and action plans in forest areas
- Motivation for groups of women: -New employment opportunities, -Supportive financial schemes, -Capacity increase for a higher quality products.

Developing Participatory Forest Management Plans

Presentation by Arneni company, Ms Albora Kacani, expert on socio-economy

The presentation gave a brief background on the process of developing participatory forest management plans and about the experiences of the pilot process in 2 municipalities. Part of this participatory process is a qualitative and quantitative socio-economic study in the communities within the forest management units. The preliminary results of the study can be summarized as follows:

General findings

- The consumption of firewood per household: 10 m³ / year
- Lighting with electricity
- The main activity of the families in the forest is harvesting wood
- Limited number of families are members of Association of Private Forest Owners (APFO)
- Mixed opinions/feelings about cooperatives or forest groups/organizations

Re forest and its management

- Adverse changes in forest are attributed to activities of the community

- Most respondents are not satisfied with forest management
- Forest ownership is unclear
- The procedures for the use of forest are considered overwhelming
- Forest protection is considered insufficient
- Most respondents are not aware of the consequences of illegal cutting

Regarding the involvement of women in forestry:

- Almost no female staff engaged in forest management
- Lack of women's self-awareness, in terms of valuing their actual/potential role in forestry
- Low level of representation of women in commune administrations
- Women's exclusion from decision-making
- Limited ownership rights. Forest inherited only by males of the family. In divorce cases is the man who takes the whole property. Widows are denied of inheritance.
- Consequently, it is extremely difficult for women to establish their own businesses or be included in the subsidy schemes

Based on the findings, Arneni contributed with the following recommendations to the conference:

- Greater attention of policymakers and various non-governmental organizations in empowering women in the forestry sector
- Increasing the participation of women in decision-making processes in all state and non-state governance structures (30%)
- The involvement of women in the development of management plans and rural development projects
- Recognition of women's ownership rights of natural resources.

Experiences of women entrepreneurs and associations in the field of forestry/agriculture – from different municipalities of Kosovo

Ms Mirlinda Kusari head of *SHE-ERA – Women's Business Association*

Three case studies related to forestry sector were presented by She-Era association. Two women entrepreneurs run nurseries, while another one manages a chestnut collection point. These businesses started in the last 5 – 10 years, and they are operating mostly locally. In the two nurseries decorative and fruit trees are cultivated. The trees are sold to the villagers within the same municipalities. The collection point receives chestnuts from villagers. The collected chestnuts are transferred and marketed by the same entrepreneur.

The main problems encountered by women entrepreneurs are: difficulty of complying with international standard, the lack of permanent advisory services, high costs of products, limited knowledge on export policies and access to foreign markets and unfavorable related legislation.

4. Recommendations

The persisting gender equality issues, approaches and best practices mentioned by the participants during the morning session were summarized and presented to the groups in the afternoon. The groups discussed the issues and potential tools/approaches in detail and finalized a list of recommendations to policy makers. The groups also defined the responsible institutions to implement the recommended measures and actions. The results of the group work are listed in the following:

Gender equality issues in the forestry sector in Kosovo:

- Less than 1% of the beneficiaries are women
- Women make up only 13.5% of the beneficiaries of other farmer support categories
- The contribution of women to the economy remains invisible due to lack of official data or updated statistics on gender in agriculture and forestry
- Human resources are not utilized, i.e. the knowledge and capacities of women
- Lack of infrastructure
- Access of women to educational institutions/ programmes is very limited
- Unequal access to forest resources
- Unclear property and inheritance rights and inadequate implementation
- Lack of Government's actions on women inclusion
- Lack of women's awareness, self-confidence and capacity to lobby
- Biased mentality, i.e. believing that forestry is men's field
- Lack of infrastructure - e.g. collection points for forest fruits - , which could strengthen the economic position of women in forestry
- Limited communication of grants and other government support

Recommendations of Group A

Facilitated by Arneni

- Timely information and awareness about grants and subsidies
Ministry gender aspect officials/APFO can assist in information, payment unit
- Increasing the capacities of the newly established women sections (within APFO associations etc.), investments according to the identified needs
Central level, CNVP trainees, donors
- Increase (encourage) women's participation in forestry advisory services
Ministry, APFO, Municipalities
- Establishment of SME
Associations, APFO
- Technical assistance on marketing
NGO in coordination with the investor –Ministry of Finances, Donor associations
- Monitoring of quotas for increasing women's participation in above mentioned spheres
Gender Equality Officer, Agency for Gender Equality, Municipalities

Recommendations of Group B

Facilitated by SHE-ERA

- Establishment of affirmative gender policies in forestry sector and introduction of related policy tools, such as positive discrimination/ quotas by MAFRD
Government at the local and central level
- Review of the legislation and gender representation in forest policies and strategies / MAFRD
Local Governance, Parliamentary Commission for Gender Issues, Parliament
- Increasing institutional capacities for inclusion of women in decision making processes
Different business associations, Kosovo Women Network, Chamber of Commerce, Norma NGO
- Implementation of Property legislation
APFO, Kosovo Forest Agency, Forestry Department, Norma, Municipalities
- Joint forest management
Forest Management Board, MAFRD, Municipalities
- Exchange of best practices among women involved in forestry
MAFRD, Municipal Directories, Media
- Training of Trainers through study visits
MAFRD, NGO, Local Government

Annex 1

Conference on the Role of Women in Forestry in Kosovo

Hotel AFA, Pristina, October 24, 2013

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