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# GENDER WATER AND AGRICULTURE-8 SEPTEMBER 2017

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## Workshop Report



8 September 2017

The Claridges, New Delhi

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## Introduction

### Panel 1: Gender Context within Eastern Gangetic Basin

The first panel aimed at exploring the theoretical and explanatory frameworks needed to understand the gender context within EGB. The panel was chaired by Prof Saraswati Raju from JNU, New Delhi and presentations were made by Dr.SadikaHaque from Bangladesh Agricultural University; Dr Anindita Dutta from University of Delhi and Dr.Mallarika Roy from JNU, New Delhi. Dr.SadikaHaque brought out the facets of gender based violence, while Dr. Dutta and Dr. Roy used frameworks of space and time respectively to widen the understanding of gender. This session was deemed as important as the overall gender relations needs to be understood before the role of women in access to land and water and their contribution to agriculture can be understood. Beginning with the reasons behind gender based violence, frameworks of space and time were used to explain the context of gender in EGP in particular, though this framework, it emerged from the discussion, could apply to any region.

#### 1. *Underpinnings of gender based violence*

The conceptual underpinnings of gender based violence are evoked differently by feminist writers, biological researchers and psychologists. While feminist writers like Millar Brown and Peggy Reeves Sanday identify rape as an act embedded in patriarchy and emerging from particular socio-cultural situations, biological researchers equate rape as an activity of unable men. Psychologists like Lisac David stress on rapists' bad relationship with fathers as the primary reasons for increased incidences of rape.



Relating the cause of gender based violence to agrarian relations, it was highlighted that *'our society is agrarian and when the agrarian relations change there is no encouragement (accorded to women) to work in agriculture, hence gender based violence emerges'*. Women, are more visible in the

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homestead agriculture than in agricultural work beyond the boundaries of home. Also, the women in South-east Asia are different from the women in South Asia. What came out of the discussion was that women cannot be hence viewed as a homogenous identity. The complexities in terms of class, caste, religion and ethnicity are described, but that space could importantly intersect to necessitate a nuanced understanding of gender, was clear in this session.

## **2. Genderscapes as an effective tool for gender equity**

The idea of genderscape was coined by Appadurai A (1996), as an effective tool for intervention towards gender equity. It was highlighted that there are genderscapes where women are valued differently and hence have different degrees of agency. Genderscapes were formulated as fluid and multilayered spaces *where performances, perceptions and portrayals are played out*. For instance, there is a higher social value accorded to women in some regions due to their higher participation in rural economy (rice growing) within certain kinship regimes.



To understand genderscape there is a need to understand the presence of a *patriarchal heartland along with peripheries of softer constitutions of patriarchy*. Broadly, it is understood that in the making of a regional gender scape, four realms viz. that of nature (natural landscapes), social relations (kinship regimes, gender relations), meaning (dominant norms of gender and reinforcement through portrayals- folklore, media) and agency (through which gender is eventually lived and performed) hold significance. Additionally, strategic needs of women need to be addressed over practical needs since practical needs of women tend to reify existing gender norms however strategic needs have the capability to introduce transformative changes. Therefore, it was argued that there is a need for intervention programs to look at the realms of meaning and social relations so as to impact the realm of agency. However, the same varies from region to region.

## **3. Significance of regional gendered history**

To understand the identities of women, there is a need to understand the historical trajectories of women within the region. Taking the case of Dooars and the Terai, it was highlighted that regional

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historical trajectories have shaped agrarian relations since late 18th century. The early methods of land revenue settlement and land distribution for different purposes adopted by East India Co. hold significance in shaping the gendered history of the Dooars and the Terai.

It was so because the land distributed during East India Co. rule had certain rights for certain women pointing to the fact that *women's access to agriculture is not a disaster story from the beginning*. For the Dooars and Terai, Rajbangsi women have enjoyed a better position in the community than other caste women from the Hindu society. Therefore, gendered region does not allow us to form a single representative woman figure and hence articulation of regional gender politics is considered necessary.



### Important Questions

- There have been contradictions in the gender space of Bengal: the provisions of Dayabhaga, early participation of women in public spaces, low fertility rates on the one hand and regressive widow norms, low access of land to women and low average ages at marriages. How can these contradictions be explained?
- What factors have led to determining the access to land and low women's participation of labour?
- BRAC – Bangladesh is now Open Defecation Free (ODF) because women have been empowered to make the decision about where to put washrooms in every village; also, men and women are mandated to jointly fetch water in their homes – which of these two is a way to move from practical to strategic needs?

### Discussion

Different factors determine the contradictions; the Dayabhaga system and provision of land and property inheritance has ironically led to practice of regressive norms for widow; women's access to land rights has remained puzzling in the sense of *pattas* not being given to women. Even at the policy level, household is analogous with a male household head and this has resulted in a derivative use of the notion of a female headed household. Access to higher education and more

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public visibility were results of the partition (refugee population) to a large extent due to which women had to go out and earn money though the traditional patriarchal norms would tend to keep them back home. Therefore, in many ways genderscape of Bengal has been unclear and in transition in the recent years. In certain regions in India, women are more visible hence space is critical to the identity of women. In Nordic countries on gender transformative interventions, child care leave is preferred over maternity leave which is not the case in India. Hence, it's not about getting women into men's world rather the other way around. Though men learn the language of equality very fast however it does not necessarily lead to transformation in gender relations; *'for instance men rolling chapattis can still abuse their wives'*. Also, the gender relations need to be problematized in terms of patriarchy perpetuated by women – hence it's about gender relations. For this reason, sometimes indicators on gender could sometimes be misleading. One needs to look at the institutional mechanisms and provisions and the resulting changes in gender relations. Women are not seen as managers of knowledge and finance. Allowing women to be 'empowered' as a result of certain practices and policies does not address structural inequalities. There has been a shift from celebrating women's agency to women's empowerment in the development literature in recent years, and that detracts from analysis of structural inequalities resulting from gender relations.

### **Chairperson's Comments**

The chair thanked the panelists for their presentations. She commented that *empowerment is most misused and wrongly used word, it is even a vulgarised word in today's age*. Speaking on forms of control, Dr Raju shared about institutions which have controlled the access to land by women viz. *rakshabandhan, karvachauth* etc. In water and agriculture, she highlighted that the differential interests of men and women at times emanate out of the gender division of their roles and responsibilities. Citing an example of the farmers in Nepal, Dr Raju shared that male farmers wanted water in initial stages of land preparation while women farmers wanted it throughout the season (weeding). She shed light on the fact that women have multiple locations in terms of caste, class, ethnicity etc. Dr Raju mentioned that patriarchal structures could even lead women to practice patriarchy, echoing a similar observation in the preceding discussion. For the EGP region, she mentioned that though overall patriarchal structures may exist, regional contexts are very important which produces regional patriarchies. Dr Raju also threw light on the absence of regional contextualization in policy documents which was also the case with Eastern Gangetic Basin (EGB).

### **Summary**



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The first session dealt with the way gender space has been conceived for the EGP, with the understanding that unless the basics of gender relations are understood, the role of women in agriculture and their access to water and land cannot be unpacked. It emerged from the discussion that frameworks of both space and time are crucial to analyzing gender relations. The session also concluded that though a common geography ties the region loosely, the plural histories of the regions have given rise to complex gender relations within this region, which are not only varied, but also has to be understood in relation with the axes of caste, ethnicity, religion and class. There is thus a case to explore further the gender relations in this region, as also place it in relation to the other regions of South Asia.

## **Panel 2: Existing research gaps on gender in the water and agricultural sector with a particular focus on Eastern Gangetic Basin**

The panel aimed at (i) bringing together the existing research and (ii) identifying the gaps on 'gender in the water and agricultural sector' with a particular focus on the Eastern Gangetic Basin. The panel was chaired by Dr. Maria Fay Rola-Rubzen from the Curtin Business School and presentations were made by Dr. Ranjitha Puskur from IRRI and Dr. Deepak Mishra from JNU. Drawing from her experiences at CGIAR, Dr. Puskur focused on the gaps that exist in the feminization literature, stressed on the importance of understanding and measuring women empowerment and on the methodological gaps that exist in gender research. Dr. Mishra made observations on the Indian economy and on Indian agriculture in particular. He emphasized the need to understand the changes that have emerged in accessing water as a result of macro-economic reforms. He also drew attention to the need to go beyond the feminization/de-feminization debate so as to understand the gender division of labour in the EGB. The gaps and observations can be broadly classified under the following heads:

### ***1. Migration and feminization/de-feminization of agriculture***

The region shows a long history of migration. The changes in farm management and in gender division of labour in households as a result of migration has not been explored enough.

Literature says that male selective out migration has resulted in women playing bigger roles in farm management. In the context of EGB it has to be further explored



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whether women are actually playing a bigger role in the management of farms and in decision making or are they just contributing to the labour that has been lost with the moving away of men.

While the rhetoric is that there is a large-scale feminization of agriculture particularly in the EGB there is no data to prove it. In the feminization/de-feminization debate in India, the conceptual framework of inter-sectoral movement of labour is used as the basis to examine the extent of feminization or de-feminization. It is not inter-sectoral movement of labour which will capture the gender dimension of this change. In order to understand this change there is a need to go beyond the dominant thinking of seeing the economy as sectors. The need is to lay emphasis on labour which has proved to be successful exercise in the context of time use patterns of labour which reveals more about labour relations rather than any standard classification of employment across sectors.

Feminization of labour has implications on agricultural productivity and the dominant hypothesis is that of low productivity on women managed farms due to their limited access to resources. There is not enough data to show this and therefore the correlation of women managed farms and productivity needs to be understood better.

## ***2. Change in access to water driven by macro-economic processes and neo-liberal reforms***

Property rights and access to water are strongly linked and it continues to be so particularly in the context of agriculture. The neoliberal reforms process has been reconstituting the property relations in relation to all the different ways in which water is accessed at least in rural India. For example, the emergence of water markets is clearly linked to the neoliberal reconstruction of the economy. The access to CPRs has also been changing and state provision for irrigation and domestic water use is also undergoing substantial change in the past few years. The way these changes are unfolding in the specific contexts is a key question that needs to be understood. There is some understanding that privatization and commodification of water leads to certain kinds of gender differentiated outcomes but there is certainly a need to do more work to understand the meaning and implications of all these different forms of reconfiguration of property resources.

## ***3. Interface between the female farmers, the gender dimension of agriculture and the water markets***

The agrarian change that has been unfolding in the Eastern India is linked to the pumpset revolution which in several contexts has resulted in the creation of water markets. Access to this water for agriculture at times becomes crucial for small and marginal farmers. Currently very less is known about interface between the female farmers, the gender dimension of agriculture and the

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water markets. It is crucial to understand this in the context of EGB where there has been a rise in the women headed households and in some cases, greater burdens being borne by women in spite of their relative invisibility in farming activities.

#### ***4. Microfinance and extension services***

Finance remains a major issue while talking about gender and agriculture. In order to address the issue, there is a need to mainstream rural finance, which is currently a gap. Statistics say that world-wide only about 10% of extension services provided reach women. This is a huge gap. Therefore, it is necessary to design strategies wherein the knowledge and advisory services reach men and women.



#### ***5. Role of women in the face of climate change***

There is no knowledge on how women impact or are impacted by climate change (extreme climatic events). There is some understanding on the kind of adaptation mechanisms and coping strategies that they use but there is very little on mitigation. This is a huge gap that persists.

#### ***6. Institutional interventions across various sectors***

The linkages between water use for agriculture and domestic consumptions have already been established in the existing literature. The linkages between water sanitation and nutrition outcomes are much more directly recognized in the literature now. The challenge is to understand the institutional intervention in these isolated areas or together for water use in general. For example, Panchayats are much more involved in the sanitation program but we do not know how that leads to changes in water uses in general, and access to water for women in particular. Also, the construction of water rights remains an unclear area. This needs to be further explored.

#### ***7. Gaps in understanding and measuring empowerment***

Empowerment is a complex concept and not much is known on how to measure it. In the notion of agency and decision-making there is no understanding on how intra-household negotiations work.

#### ***8. Gaps in gender research***

From a methodological point of view, most of the research undertaken in gender either equates gender analysis with sex-disaggregated analysis with a very little understanding of social or



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cultural contexts or just focuses on qualitative research. But it is necessary to bring in both the methods together which would then give a complete picture. In most research and development organizations there is a lack of front end analysis. Gender is usually conceived as an afterthought. More attention needs to be paid in order to bridge this gap.

### ***9. Informing policy***

It is essential to engage with the policy makers on the gender issue and this requires us to explore on the kind of evidences that the policy makers would respond to. While there is willingness among some of the policy makers in the arena to bring about a change, they are unaware of the ways to bring about these changes. This is where the role of practitioners and researchers comes in providing them information and ways to go about.

#### **Important Questions**

1. After the changes that have happened in the Panchayat system in terms of a move towards greater decentralization, water activists around South Asia have been pushing very hard to have control over water bodies under local government organizations whether it be Panchayat or Municipalities. Do you think that it is a practical step? Is it possible to take a small step in that direction?
2. How does caste intersect with gender to manifest in resource access and engagement in agriculture? Caste appears to be an important lens to understand in particular the access to water and associated inequalities.
3. How are terms such as diversification or intensification defined?

#### ***Discussion***

Decentralization will work to the extent that decentralized bodies are democratic. The access to these decentralized bodies is probably better than what people had earlier but not necessarily that all of them are democratic. The issue of decentralization and democratization goes together.

The role of caste is complex along with class but important as far as access to resources are concerned. Caste is especially significant because it has a direct bearing on access to land which is a pre-condition to having access to water. It is also related to location of the field because of the way land allocation across caste groups gets spatially distributed in a typical village. Because of this, caste also holds significance for nature of access to water bodies. Fourthly caste also relates to the access to local institutions of power and energy. These are also there which are built into the caste hierarchies. Diversification and intensification of agricultural systems is a standard definition that

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agriculture and bio physical scientists come up with, which is about more crops in a unit of time and land or diversity of enterprises in agricultural livelihoods.

### **Chairperson's comments**

The chair shared the key themes that emerged from the presentations:

- There exists a plethora of micro studies but there is a lack of macro studies. While there are learnings from the studies it is essential to synthesize, and translate them into policies.
- An emerging issue is that of climate change as it has an influence on water. A key question here is, are we also looking into mitigation aspects and are we looking at them from a gendered lens?
- It is important to make our message clear and understandable to those outside our domain.
- It is advisable to adopt a mixed methods approach in the research to make it richer and nuanced.

### **Summary**

The session through presentations and discussions highlighted the gaps that exist on gender in agriculture and water sector in a holistic manner. One of the key points that emerged from the session were the gaps that exist in the literature that provide evidences of feminization of agriculture in the region. In this context, Dr.Mishra pointed out the need to go beyond the dominant thinking of seeing the economy as sectors in order to understand the labour relations when talking of feminization/defeminization. Emphasis was laid on the need to understand the way access to water is changing in the neo-liberal India and how these changes are unfolding in the regional context. There has been limited progress made in women empowerment in the agricultural sector which brought forth the need to rethink of what we understand by empowerment; this means that empowerment is not just about access to technology and resources for women, but about their ability to make decisions about the resources. The presenters also discussed the need to adopt a mixed method approach in gender research. Lastly, comments from across the table pointed towards a need to explore the ways that would facilitate the involvement of the policy makers by conveying the knowledge to them that would be readily acceptable.

### **Panel 3: Best practices from three countries**

The panel of best practices made an attempt to bring together the various successes (and failures) that have been made in the area of agriculture and irrigation, for women. Presentations were made

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by Dr. Maria Fay Rola-Rubzen from the Curtin Business School, Ms. Nafisa Barot formerly from Utthan, Dr. Aditi Mukherjee from ICIMOD, Dr. Kuntalika Kumbhkar from PRADAN and Ms. Panchali Saikia from IWMI. The presentations focused on few examples from South Asian countries that vibrantly portrayed the mixed contributions of academician and practitioners in alleviating the status of women farmers, vis-à-vis their male counterparts. The practices can be broadly divided into the following themes:

### **1. Affirmative actions by the law of countries**

Bangladesh has recognized the special needs of women farmers, young farmers, farmers in special constrained areas. Women farmer groups, women SMEs, and women organizations are particularly encouraged through policy and schemes for their development.



In India, The National Policy for women (2016), supports women farmers in their livelihood, supports their visibility and identity, securing their rights over resources and provides social protection cover. Self Help Groups supported by the Government seem to be making a positive difference in the lives of women.

### **2. Skill-creation for women**

IRRI encourages women participation in training. Their programs tried to embed a special component for women. They also conducted a leadership program in Asia and Africa, the impact of which was significant.



SRFSI practiced gender mainstreaming in the Easter Gangetic Plain, through gender awareness and sensitization, collecting gender disaggregated data, conducting gender inclusive trainings and disseminating knowledge on technology, where the impacts were monitored in order to make sure that the impact was meaningful. The premise is that

agriculture, gender and food security are interlinked. Women's control over resources is critical to

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poverty reduction. Making agricultural development gender inclusive, is a matter of development, not ideologies. The participation and involvement of women increased after such interventions, and were accompanied by an increase in production, income, nutrition and education.

Pradan, working in Gujarat organizes poor women around Self Help Groups (SHG) and conducts trainings for the same. They conduct motivational and technical training, with a focus on the equality of women to men. They also conduct fertilizer trainings, trainings on nursery, thus creating utilization skills for women in agriculture.

Instances of women being given training in watershed management were cited in this session. In the backdrop of being a traditionally male dominated society, Pradan broke the stereotype by encouraging and training women, while involving men, to lead the watershed development program. Now, the women are trained enough to read the maps, toposheets and even suggest courses of action. This, other than making them more efficient in the undertaking the watershed work, has instilled a sense of confidence in them that is seen as a step towards bringing in positive changes in the existing gender relations.

### ***3. Understanding the gender context and giving women a voice:***

Utthan working in Bhal region, in Gujarat, works towards promoting the recognition of a woman as an equal citizen, and recognising the multiple identities of a woman (leader, farmer etc.).



They follow the concept of integrated empowerment and development through organising and strengthening their voice, prioritising their needs and addressing issues, engaging women in decision making at different levels and preparing men and women as master trainers. Such practices prepare women to make negotiations for themselves.

### ***4. Improving farm infrastructure and inputs:***

Utthan also promotes various soil and water conservation techniques, providing women access to improved variety of seeds, reducing women's drudgery by mechanising certain activities such as pullies for wells and weeders.

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ICIMOD adopted a scheme to encourage women to own solar pumps in the Nepal Terai region. Three financial models were developed wherein farmers could buy solar pumps with 60% subsidy and additional grant loans. A provision was made for 10% additional subsidy for women, provided that they owned the land. This, along with promotion campaigns made sure that women get improved access to agricultural infrastructure. Thus, giving additional discounts to women can lead to a change in the structural inequality that existed in land ownership.



Pradan also provided women the access to various farming machinery and methods such as Trellis technology/Machan, Pit Method tomato, maize with French beans and Aerobic DSR.

IWMI promoted the approach of collectives in Madhubani, Bihar. Large-scale out migration from the area had left the burden of agriculture on women, who had less finances, less physical support and less technical knowledge to carry out sustainable agriculture.



Thus, a collective leasing of land for groups of farmers, who could pool labour and capital, and share profits was suggested. Irrigation equipment was jointly owned

and managed. This benefitted the women's collectives who were able to pool their resources and reap the benefits. Some groups were able to have productive agriculture and were also able to sell their produce in the market.

### Important Questions

1. When extra subsidies were given to women owners of land, was anything done to make sure that the women were the actual owners of land and not just proxy owners of the land? What are the other factors driving the decision of irrigation techniques to be used (Market, climate change etc.)?



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2. While introducing women to technology and training, was any resistance faced when the women started entering men's domain of work, that is usually not considered 'woman's work'?
  3. Women often feel subdued about their own agency to speak about the way they actually feel resources should be managed. Is that a challenge in the field?
  4. How are the women's collective groups formed in terms of the class-ethnic-religious composition of the groups, and the regional differences worked on?
  5. Who takes the cropping decisions in a household where the male head has migrated? Is it by the woman or by the man over the phone?
  6. What are the specific gender challenges in the collective approach in the EGP region?

### ***Discussion***

In so far as subsidies to women are concerned, ICIMOD did a detailed financial and technical survey and made sure that the land was indeed in the name of the women. In some cases, 2 months' time was given to transfer ownership of the land to the woman's name. The success was however region specific, and thus depended on the socio-cultural backdrop. Also, areas where summer paddy was grown, higher rates of adoption to solar pumps were seen to save on the diesel cost.

There is no doubt that even the women who were in the SHGs needed their husband's permission to join the group. But a continuous effort is required to create space for women within the community where patriarchal rules determine their work and roles. There are, however, still certain categories such as the Brahmins and the OBCs, where the women are still hesitant in coming up with their concerns. In case of the solar pumps scheme, the financial benefits are adequately visible, so there was no resistance by the men even when the land was shifted to the woman's name.

Women do undermine their agency to speak. It was encountered while piloting for IFPRI's index called Women in Agricultural Empowerment Index, where the men and women were to answer the same questions separately. It was really hard to get the women to answer on their own, as there was always her nephew or brother to answer the questions, which may not have been representative of what they really thought.

The initiation of formation of collective groups was based on categories of land owners and share croppers. The groups consisted of a mix of different caste groups. One group in Bihar had raised issue of not being able to speak up due to the fear of saying something offensive to an elder, or a higher caste person. Other regions had groups of people from the same caste. So, it varies from

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region to region. In Nepal, women are more active in irrigation. In Bihar, women rely for decisions on their mother-in-law. Also, while in Nepal, men's out-migration led the women take decisions regarding agriculture, partly because their husbands are unavailable on phones, in Bihar, since the men migrated closer to home, the men took the decisions over phone.

There had been differences on how women approach the issues of labour division and water management in Bihar and Nepal. In West Bengal, women are very active, especially in the vegetable cultivation. In a village inhabited by a tribal community which never cultivated anything during the dry season, have now started doing it.

### **Chairperson's comments**

Panelists have reinforced two prejudices. Firstly, 'Best Practices' is an overrated phrase. It assumes a homogeneity that does not exist. It's important to learn from best practices, but also to not be blinded by it and keep following them. Secondly, if meaningful good work is to be done in a traditional South-Asian society, then may be women's education and women's literacy should be the point of entry.

### **Summary**

This session had rich presentations on best practices, and it was also concluded that it is important to understand the practices on ground, whether they were successes or failures, or just neutral. Participants agreed that it is impossible to alter the status of women in agriculture, or any other sector, without altering gender relations. Diverse case studies from Nepal, Bangladesh India (not restricted to EGP) were presented which demonstrated that bringing about a structural change in gender relations is not easy, though a beginning has been made. The highlight of the session was in the obvious ways it connected and engaged with the issues thrown up by the participants from the earlier sessions by panelists from the academia. The questions that remain are

1. Can examples from within the region work for other contexts in the region?
2. Can examples from outside the region work for the region?

### **Gender -Water - Agriculture (GWA) Forum**

The rationale for the forum was the disconnect of water and agriculture with the existing several gender forums. Hence, it was agreed that it was worth having a loose network of academicians and practitioners in the connected theme of Gender, Water and Agriculture. Also, it was suggested that expertise for the time-being should be drawn from members having experience in linking at least

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two of the three cross cutting issues at hand, preferably gender being one of them. It was discussed that for a start, a virtual space can be worked on, that would aim at information sharing in terms of published work, field notes, photo features etc. The forum need not stay restricted to the EGP, though collating information on the region would be an important focus of the forum.

Participants agreed that the forum would provide the space to understand each other and could be a platform to bridge the gap between the knowledge developed by the academia and grass-root experiences gained by the civil society organizations. The members can collaborate in terms of writing proposals in the area, pool resources to work together and work towards developing common vocabularies across disciplines. The forum can subsequently contribute towards bringing together a convergence between qualitative and quantitative work, and engage in developing material that could be used by the policy makers in the three interconnected themes.

Towards making this forum a reality, each of the members present in the workshop committed to some contribution towards the forum from their end.

*Sucharita Sen* – SaciWATERS will start a webpage to kickstart the forum to share the work of different members, their publications, photos features, field narratives and links to existing related resources on the web such as resources from Thirdpole at the initial stage without any financial support. Subsequently, however, to keep this forum going and to bring the members together, some financial support may be required in the future.

*Anand Pawar* – Committed to facilitate training around issues of masculinity with or without resources, to start with.

*Maria Fay Rola-Rubzen* – She would promote the GWA Forum within her network and establish connections for collaboration with International and South Asia researchers.

*Deepak Mishra* – Agreed to invite friends and colleagues to join the Forum, who are working in various sectors and contribute through sharing of his field notes.

*NafissaBharot* – Agreed to contribute in the livelihood capacity building trainings, bring forth expanded of innovations by sharing it through the website. Specifically, Utthan agreed to share materials about achievements in terms of collaborative efforts among women from different social groups.

*Chetali Chhabra* – Agreed to support and utilize the partnership of ACIAR built in South Asia to share their work.

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*Manish Maskara* – Would contribute in working on methodological aspects of gender research particularly water and agriculture and compile the existing literature around methodology of gender research.

*PanchaliSaikia* – Shared her interest in learning the methodologies that have been applied in gender studies not only in research, but also applied in different implementation interventions. She agreed to contribute by sharing her field experiences through blogs and photo features, case studies, and short stories.

*Joydeep Gupta* – Agreed to publish related stories with a word limit of 1200 words. (In this connection, Sucharita asked if Joydeep could facilitate a collation of these stories to share on the forum website from the region). In addition, he promoted the idea of creating a #tag for the GWA Forum.

*KuntalikaKumbhkar* – Agreed to contribute to case studies, and do collaborative writing to bring in practitioner’s perspective and put them into action.

*SuparanaKatyaini* – Agreed to contribute through the field notes related to her work from the Brahmaputra River Basin. She shared that her interest in the forum is to learn about the gender research methods and the conceptual frameworks that she could use in her subsequent work.

*Mallarika Sinha Roy*– Agreed to bring in the gender historical mapping of the EGB region and share on the website. She also agreed to share her field notes on the forum website.

*Ranjitha Puskur*– Agreed to connect the forum with the gender and agriculture community which includes national partners (both research and development partners). She showed interest in moderating virtual discussions on some of the key topics that were raised in the course of the workshop, and take the message to those outside to understand the vocabulary and motivate them to join the forum.

*Sudha Sapkota* – Agreed to link the donor and partners and inform them of gender sensitive issues within agriculture.

*ChandaGurung Goodrich* – Since the forum is not just from the EGB region, she agreed to share information about implementation practices and their methodologies particularly vis-a-vis livelihood and climate energy nexus. She pointed out the need for one person who is moderating and facilitating this process of GWA Forum. She suggested that SaciWATERS could lead this effort to ensure that continuance of the forum work. Sucharita suggested a need for one small group to engage in this effort as it may not be a sustainable endeavour if only one organisation is responsible

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for taking the forum work forward. Ranjitha suggested that a dedicated member is of utmost necessity who would be responsible to run the forum, and then funding would be essential for this. Aditi suggested that since SaciWATER has good experience of managing the networks on water quality hence they could take the lead.

*Sadika Haque* – Suggested if the group could think of institutionalizing the forum so that the idea/knowledge generated is strongly promoted for better publication and opinion-building.

*Monica Priya* – Agreed to share her field work experience in the form of blogs, photo notes. She also suggested when we exchange information through the website it is important to virtually meet through Skype or webinars to discuss issues, stories to be shared with the forum. Her expectation was that the forum expands beyond EGB region. Monica agreed to take out one day in a month for the forum, supported by an editorial team for a quality check.

*Aditi Mukherji* – Agreed to connect the forum with larger groups such as IPCC, share literature and link to other water portals such as Arghyam. She suggested for collaborative research work on feminization particularly in Nepal and Bangladesh and to carry out a systematic review of the existing quantitative and qualitative data.

*Saraswati Raju* – Agreed to share literature with the forum, link with some of the existing forums (such as Feminist Geographers) and be part of the editorial board provided the work does not extend beyond one or two days in a month.

*Anshika John* – Agreed to support the team in collating information and conducting related research.

*Aditya Bastola* – Agreed to cover the news about the forum at the global level through UNDP Cap-Net, and collate Nepal literature and share it on the website.

*Andrew Campbell* – Congratulated the team for getting the right people on the table, and a mix of both practitioners and academics, appreciated the idea of setting up a network. He also suggested over the next few years SDIP program will be able to put resources for this activity, as it has low costs with high returns.