

www.iufrogenderindia.info



Forest Research
Institute (F.R.I.)
Dehra Dun

www.iufro.org

IUFRO Conference on Gender and Forestry

November 16th till November 19th 2008

**A Critical Analysis of Indigenous Livelihoods and Sustainable Forest Management
– Integrating Gender Aspects. Case of the Sangha Trinational Conservation Area**

Victorine S. Che

Key Words: Gender, Livelihood, Sustainable Forest Management, Bantu, Baaka

Abstract: The objective of the research imparted here was to illustrate that in order to improve on SFM, it is necessary to include both, indigenous men and women in the management process, because sustainability requires an understanding of the construction of gender roles as a function of resource use and management. The two ethnic groups in the villages studied are the Bantu and Baaka.

The results of this research show that forest use is gendered. Hunting, which encompasses several methods (with snares, nets, firearms, assegai, crossbow, lances) is an activity almost only carried out by men. Baaka women are however also involved in this activity. They normally hunt with nets and also perform rituals to call on their god to protect their men before they go on hunting trips.

Both, Baaka and Bantu women are more involved in gathering than their men. Fishing is an activity in which both men and women are equally involved. However, the fishing methods are usually different for men and women. While men mainly use nets and hooks in large rivers, women usually fish in smaller rivers and mainly by building dams or barriers as well as using toxic sap from plants to paralyse the fish and then using conical fishing baskets and machetes to collect the fish.

This research shows the differences between men and women and the importance of these differences to SFM and the improvement of local livelihoods. The different activities and knowledge systems of one group are complementary to those of the other, so one group depends on the other to be able to develop strategies to efficiently use and manage the forest, to produce the livelihood outcomes they long for. This therefore indicates how important men and women are to the management process, hence, should be considered equal partners in this management process. The intimate knowledge men and women have acquired of their local environment over generations of experience and observation plays an important role in the shaping of the livelihood strategies the people engage and succeed in.

Address: Institute for Forest Utilization and Work Science
University of Freiburg
Werthmannstr. 6, D-79085 Freiburg, Germany
Email of corresponding author: victorine.che@fobawi.uni-freiburg.de