Women smallholders mango farming enterprises as resilience strategy

Description of the project: This project strengthens the resilience of 6,000 smallholder farmers and rural communities through the sustainable production and transformation of high quality, drought resistant green mango varieties into mango achaar. Hebron Mango Tree Owner Primary and Vhembe Agro-Processing Cooperatives are building the capacity of women smallholder farmers to create their own enterprise and diversify their income sources outside the mango season. These enterprises will be developed with participatory methodologies to ensure a gender-responsive implementation of viable, culturally appropriate and marketable diversified activities.

Climate impact: The project improves the climate resilience of grassroots communities as they breed drought adapted fruit trees and develop local sustainable product transformation based on an inclusive business model. Furthermore, the creation of diversified enterprises ensures the use of a wide variety of crops, thus contributing to preserving the local biodiversity. Farmers are trained to use rainwater harvesting techniques and to manage accurate weather monitoring systems, to adapt to severe climate impacts.

Gender impact: In order to close the gender gap in the communities, women are empowered to possess undisputed knowledge in organic farming methods, irrigation technologies and mango processing. They also gain strong leadership and entrepreneurship skills via trainings on basic financial management, governance and marketing strategy. They benefit from the cooperative model that facilitates access to markets and the value chain. The project brings women to the forefront in the fight against climate change, poverty and inequality.

Scalability / replicability: Provincial and local authorities are actively involved and the private sector as off-takers of the mango products plays a key role in ensuring scalability of this initiative. It can contribute to South Africa’s National Adaptation Strategy and Green Economy Strategy, especially in terms of innovation and job creation. The objective is to extend to other regions of the country and further strengthen the domestic mango value chain with a social and gender-responsive philosophy.

Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) in India

Description of the project: The CCRI carries out a participatory assessment and documentation of community conservation initiatives in the light of threats to their customary practices such as grazing and small scale agriculture, that secure their livelihoods. Communities in 3 ecologically diverse Indian states: Bengal, Maharashtra and Gujrat, identified external and internal threats and participated in capacity building and training workshops, as well as resource mapping and focus group discussions. The project also contributes to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity’s 2011-2020 Strategic Plan and Aichi Targets by providing bottom-up policy advice on effective and appropriate forms of community conservation.

Climate impact: Local communities’ and indigenous people’s customary knowledge and practices regarding sustainable management of forests and grasslands is essential for climate adaptation and mitigation. Indeed, they have proven to provide human groups with enough resources for their livelihoods without over-exploiting nature. This project supports communities in defending their rights and sustainable practices against the multifaceted effects of deforestation.

Gender impact: The CCRI fostered dialogue between women and other marginalised groups of Tadoba Tiger Reserve, Gond communities, Banni grasslands and pastoralist groups in Gujrat, or eastern Himalayas in Bengal and Rabha communities from Nepal. This assessment revealed that gender differences form the basis of roles’ and responsibilities’ distribution for the use and conservation of biodiversity and natural resources. Amplifying women’s voices in decision-making processes and allowing them to access, promotes gender equality and is key to protect and recover traditional knowledge.

Scalability / replicability: This project is part of the global CCRI programme, with 68 communities conducting similar assessments in 22 countries, proving its scalability and replicability. It can easily generate effective support for community conservation initiatives by highlighting the benefits of biodiversity conservation as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation. If policy and decision-makers integrate the CCRI recommendations made by local communities, especially women, this powerful initiative will be further expanded.

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