



## SOCIAL FORESTRY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

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#### Xuan Mai SFTC: Gender integrated in social forestry curriculum

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**Men and women have different needs, approaches and decision-making and participation in forest resources management. That gender issues are integrated in the curriculum of the social forestry subject helps teachers and students identify roles of and inequity in gender.**

***Gender analysis helps effective work division, so that women are able to do their job better and work efficiency is much improved.***

In the early 1970s, there was a new viewpoint on Women, Environment and Sustainable Development. In many countries, including Vietnam, both men and women play an important role in natural resources management and use. In remote areas where ethnic groups live, women have a more important role in the household economy and forest product utilisation. They collect dry wood for daily use and they are directly influenced by the exhaustion of the natural resources.

Thus, women must be paid attention to, encouraged and considered as the target group in rural and forestry development projects.

#### Why gender in curricula?

Gender development aims at empowering women and providing them with more opportunities to participate in projects and programmes actively and equally to men, and they must be one of the beneficiaries of these projects and programmes. Comments from the women who implement social forestry activities are often more realistic, objective and comprehensive because they are the key persons in carrying out the activities. That gender is integrated in the curriculum provides students with proper awareness and attitudes about gender issues, so in the future they will make suitable labour division, particularly for women, thus helping women better fulfil their work.

According to the Gender Assessment Report by seven partners of SFSP in May 1999, gender had not been mentioned sufficiently in the curricula of universities, so they agreed to integrate gender in some subjects. The first subject to integrate gender in the curriculum was Introductory Social Forestry with the objective of analysing gender roles in natural resources management. Gender analysis helps effective work division, so that women are able to do their job better and work efficiency is much improved.



*Tung Hoa poses with ethnic women during her working trip on gender issues in mountainous areas of Vietnam, Photo: SU*

#### Gender is a great concern at SFTC

Gender study in forestry and social forestry is new in Vietnam. The SFTC began implementing gender into its research projects in 2000. In its work plan for 2001, gender is a separate research topic and integrated in such subjects as Land Use Planning, Community Forest Management and Non-timber Forest Products Management.

Gender integration in social forestry of the SFTC with support of SFSP has progressed through the following milestones:

#### **1998:**

- Gender began to be integrated into the out-line of the Social Forestry subject



*Women should participate and benefit from projects equally with men, Photo: SU*

### **1999:**

- Surveys and exchanges on gender awareness were carried out within the 7 SFSP partners
- SFTC staff were trained in gender knowledge and integrating gender in human resources development and curriculum development of the Social Forestry subject

### **2000:**

- Gender became an important part of the workbook of the Social Analysis subject that will be delivered soon
- A session on gender was written as part of the Introductory Social Forestry subject work-book
- Gender was integrated into the curricula of different subjects, such as Agriculture and Forestry Extension, Social Forestry Project Management and Agroforestry
- Basic training on gender
- A gender core team was established at the Vietnam Forestry University

### **2001:**

- The Centre conducts a research project, with the topic of Gender-based labour division in the forestry production of the Dao communities in Hop Nhat village, Ba Vi commune, Ba Vi District
- A survey and workshop on gender awareness at the Vietnam Forestry University.

### **Recommendations:**

SFSP university partners should collaboratively evaluate the gender content in the curricula and define objectives for gender integration in other subjects.

Some recommendations for effective delivery of gender content in subjects:

1. Assign suitable teachers who have good social and gender knowledge
2. Teachers of other subjects should also have awareness on gender
3. Conduct research on gender and social forestry in certain contexts of different regions in Vietnam.

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