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Gender and Community Forests in a Changing Landscape: Lessons from Ban Thung Yao, Thailand

Resource
August 2013

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Summary

This study analyzes men's and women's specific roles, responsibilities and rights by identifying the levels of participation in using, managing and governing forests and forest resources, in the context of a community forest in Ban Thung Yao village of Northern Thailand. The study highlights gender differential roles, responsibilities, traditional knowledge and wisdom in community forestry, and its influence on resource use and management.

The survey revealed that empowering activities like taking initiatives, being involved in conflict resolution and actively engaging in training, were often undertaken by the men of the community while women were heavily engaged in nominal, passive and consultative process of participation. The study concludes that these attributes should be factored in while developing forest policies and programs, to ensure a fair sharing of benefits, equal rights and sustainability. Finally, the study demonstrates the critical importance of looking beyond gender representation merely in terms of 'the number of men and women'.

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