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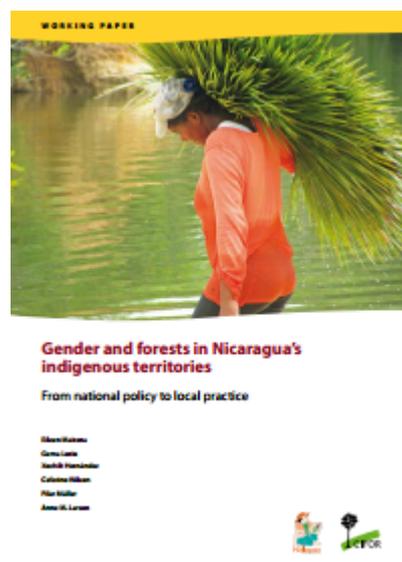
Gender and forests in Nicaragua's indigenous territories

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Summary

Women in Nicaragua's indigenous territories face substantial obstacles to participation in decision making regarding forests and forest resources in their communities. Though national laws and regional policies promote gender equity, forests are still seen primarily as the realm of men. Projects on women are rarely concerned with forests, and projects on forests rarely pay attention to women or approach forests from a gender perspective. At the community level women confront still greater obstacles: even when women are influential in other realms of local life, forests remain largely out of bounds. This working paper presents the results of preliminary research on "Gender, tenure and community forests" in the North Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAN) of Nicaragua. It is based on a review of national and regional laws, policies and literature; interviews with governmental and nongovernmental organizations; and focus groups in 18 rural Miskitu and Mayangna indigenous communities. The research was conducted by Nitlapan-UCA with the support of CIFOR and was funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). This report documents perceptions about, the meaning of and obstacles to women's participation from diverse points of view and lays the groundwork for further work at multiple levels.

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