'Engendering' Eden

Volume I

Women, Gender and ICDPs: Lessons Learnt and Ways Forward Summary Document

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TITLES IN SERIES

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BOXES

ACRONYMS

CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management Project
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CRM	Community Resource Monitors
CWM	Community Wildlife Management
DFID	Department for International Development
GAD	Gender and Development
GED	Gender, Environment and Development
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Project
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IUCN	World Conservation Union
LIRDP	Luangwa Integrated Rural Development Project, Zambia
JFM	Joint Forest Management
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NP	National Park
NRM	Natural Resource Management
ORMA	Meso-American Regional Office, IUCN
PA	Protected Area
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation
WID	Women In Development
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The conservation movement finds its roots in attempts to protect threatened colonies and their resources from both colonial powers and indigenous peoples. It was led by men: European men, many of who were ex-hunters. Women (colonised and colonial) played little role in the conservation processes: they were marginalised and dominated.

Today, as conservation moves increasingly to more community-based initiatives and those 'integrated' with the development of local communities, there is also a focus on the achievement of more equitable - particularly gender equitable - conservation. However there is inexperience and a lack of knowledge how to accomplish this. The *'Engendering' Eden* programme attempted to fill some of these existing gaps, achieve a better understanding of the linkages between gender equity and conservation and development, and to indicate ways forward.

This document summarises the key issues that have been identified through the extensive research carried out over two years, including case study work on ICDPs (Integrated Conservation and Development Projects) in Africa and Asia. Two regional studies have also been produced detailing the case studies and other examples. This document draws out the experiences and lessons learnt from them.

Men and women in both Africa and Asia and particularly those from poorer households can still be highly dependent on the collection of natural resources to fulfil household needs and contribute to food security and poverty alleviation. The collection of such resources is gender differentiated in relation to socio-economical, cultural, ethnic and geographical contexts.

However, in general women's share of decision-making power at both macro and micro levels remains low: it is dominated by men. In addition women have less access to resources and fewer opportunities to improve their lives. In Africa in particular there is a lack of organised platforms from which to address women's issues. However women, rather than men, tend to be keener to form cooperatives and mobilise themselves as a group to share responsibilities, provide support, and even to initiate change. Many have seen the advantage of 'group power'.

With a few rare exceptions, more women are illiterate than men. This can compromise their ability to make the most of the opportunities that development and conservation processes offer. In addition though women may have a good knowledge concerning the resources that they use, they tend to have a poorer understanding of environmental processes and the long-term impact of unsustainable use.

Poverty and pressures to fulfil daily household needs are major constraints for women in terms of finding time or resources to invest in conservation and environmental practices. Women are often forced to prioritise on a short-term basis. This tends to conflict directly with conservation and environmental objectives that are more long-term in nature.

Few ICDPs in both Africa and Asia have actively addressed gender issues. Though it has been realised that women are 'missing out' from ICDPs there has been a lack of experience and knowledge concerning how to tackle this. There has been a reliance on addressing problems in a haphazard and uninformed way as they arise, or on the enthusiasm and concerns of individuals. Interventions in the past have mainly focussed on 'women's projects' which have been seen as the means of overcoming the inequities that exist. These

have included projects for health provision and family planning; income generation; and credit and savings.

However, these project components tend to be considered of secondary importance to ICDPs' main activities. Their budget allocation is scarce and there has been a lack of investment in necessary training and capacity building. Few projects have made any real impact on the achievement of protected area objectives and have failed to link the conservation of resources with local development processes. And though in some cases women have benefited economically and, in fewer instances, socially, this targeting of women without understanding 'gender' has had a number of adverse impacts. These include:

- Misunderstanding and mistrust between conservation authorities, development organisations and communities, particularly women.
- Conflicting needs and priorities and a lack of participation, particularly of women.
- Misunderstanding and overlooking of women's roles, rights and responsibilities.
- Increased gender inequalities.

More recently ICDPs have realised the need to focus more directly on activities that are gender-focussed rather than women-focussed. These have included elements that attempt to increase women's empowerment through, for example, education, training, capacity building and supporting women's collective action through establishing groups. However, though in some cases attempts have been made to link these activities to the conservation of resources and environmental management, in general, 'gender' still tends to be tackled as a separate component with no connection to the different areas of projects' basic activities.

This treatment continues to fragment and isolate gender issues, whilst often requiring additional resources. It is unlikely that such efforts can have a real impact on addressing gender inequity and the relations of subordination that may exist as they allow little room for positive transformation processes. In addition there remains widespread misunderstanding of what gender really means and what impacts it has on participation in ICDPs and the distribution of benefits from them. In general, gender is still seen as an issue that is too political, too sensitive and too time- and resource-consuming for inclusion.

As such, there is, as yet, little evidence to suggest that ICDPs have contributed to more equitable long-term development in local communities. Though there have been some positive results in, for example, the establishment of women user groups; increasing the number of women participating in conservation activities and to some extent, in increasing women's benefits, it remains the case that communities, and particularly women, fail to understand and/or support the conservation-development concept that is the central crux of ICDPs. As such the long-term sustainability of ICDPs must continue to be questioned and doubts remain concerning whether, in reality, ICDPs can work.

Despite this the lack of current alternatives means that the ICDP concept continues to be invested in as the means to resolve the conflicts between conservation and communities (including women). If women's valuable contribution to their success is to be fully recognised and the constraints that gender contributes to are to be overcome then several key elements must be addressed. These include the need for:

- A long time-frame.
- The securing of women's access to resources and decision-making processes.
- A holistic, integrated, strategic, participatory and well thought-out approach.
- A focus on the use of all resources, not just wildlife.

- The de-mystifying, de-threatening and mainstreaming of 'gender'.
- The establishment of partnerships and collaborations.

If ICDPs are to be truly community-based then the gender inequities found in communities and institutions must be understood, recognised and where opportunities exist, addressed. Though this may involve tackling sensitive issues such as 'power relations', it may be the only way forward to move beyond the lip-service paid to addressing women's needs, rights and responsibilities that has been seen so far.

In addition, there is a continued failure (excluding rare examples) of local communities (both women and men) making the necessary link between their development and the conservation of natural resources, as well as rights to, and responsibilities over, such resources. This undermines the whole premise on which ICDPs have been built and therefore questions the entire ICDP approach. Unless more effort and resources are put into building up this link then ICDPs will not be sustainable.

At the same time ICDPs must not work in a vacuum but understand the relationships and linkages between the projects and 'external' factors including social, political, cultural and economic pressures and/or change. Adaptability, flexibility and a long-term focus are vital. Issues such as gender equity cannot be addressed over night but require commitment, time, resources and sensitive, well-informed interventions or support.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROTECTION OF THE 'GARDEN OF EDEN'

The conservation movement has its roots in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Concern had grown that European colonies, particularly in Africa and Asia, were rapidly being destroyed as colonial powers plundered natural resources. Attempts were made to protect wildlife and forests and preserve romanticised images of the Garden of Eden (Grove, 1995; Said, 1978). This was backed by scientific theories that explained the diversity of nature, its worth and its possible extinction (Darwin, 1859).

At the time hunting was a common colonial past time – a symbol of 'manliness' and worthy of 'sportsmanship'. By the end of the nineteenth century hunting had become a white man's preserve:

> *"not only the symbol of European dominance, but also the determinant of class within that dominance… While none of these hunters doubted their own right of access to extravagant killing, they argued for conservation policies and the need to restrict the access of others, not least that of the natives."* (MacKenzie, 1987:41; 50).

Women, both colonised and colonial, were dominated throughout the period by men, especially white men: it was they who made and enforced the laws and policies in their own interests (McClintock, 1995). Hunting epitomised the severe separation of the male and female worlds. As MacKenzie (1987:50) suggests:

> *"the medieval tournament ritualised warfare and killing and facilitated the emergence of the fittest, who would be hailed as heroes by both the crowd and the ladies in whose honour the tournament was held. The element of sexual selection implied in the tournament was not lost on an age increasingly obsessed with social Darwinism and notions of eugenics."*

Popular journals like *Boys Own Paper* were full of hunting stories and extraordinary graphic descriptions of taxidermy. Explorers such as William Smith warned his readers of the perils of travelling as a white man in Africa for, on that disorderly continent, women:

> *"if they meet a Man they immediately strip his lower parts and throw themselves upon him."* (Smith, 1745:221 in McClintock, 1995:23).

As hunter turned conservationist, conservation policy and implementation in the colonies was, in turn, led by men. Parallel to this, one finds the natural sciences evolving in the colonial powers dominated by those such as Rene Descartes, for whom:

> *"the expansion of male knowledge amounted to a violent property arrangement that made men masters and professors of nature"* (Descartes, 1968:78 in McClintock, 1995).

1.3 WOMEN, GENDER, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Defenders of women's rights have likened such impressions of male domination over nature to male domination over women. A succession of movements from *women in development* (WID) in the early 1970s (Boserup, 1970) through to *ecofeminism* (Shiva, 1988;

Merchant, 1982, 1992; Cox, 1992; Mies and Shiva, 1993) and *women, environment and development* in the 1980-90s (Dankelman and Davidson, 1988; Rodda, 1991; Sontheimer, 1991; Braidotti *et al*, 1997) have applied pressures on implementing organisations to include women in developmental and environmental concerns.

However, the literature and consequent policies based on these frameworks have not been particularly helpful in integrating women. In fact they may have encouraged further marginalisation of women's issues, with such strongly feminist perspectives being viewed as too political, too sensitive and too radical to address. Notions of women's 'special' relationship with nature (Braidotti *et al*, 1997; Shiva, 1989; Merchant, 1982, 1992) contribute little to establishing suitable points of intervention and support at a practical level. They are insufficient in explaining the variety of interests, motivations and power relations in which women find themselves in regard to managing natural resources and the environment.

A shift to gender, environment and development frameworks (GAD or GED) has opened up more constructive opportunities for a better understanding of the relationships between women, men and the environment as well as ways to integrate such an understanding into policy and practice (Jackson, 1993). These approaches argue for a more informed gender analysis of social relations and the recognition that men and women have different positions within the household and control over resources (Kabeer, 1994; Jewitt and Kumar, 1999). They take a more confrontational approach: the rationale being that through empowerment women can achieve equality and equity with men in society (Moser, 1993).

1.4 'ENGENDERING' EDEN

Today, as conservation increasingly moves to more community-based initiatives and those 'integrated' with the development of the local communities, an emphasis is also being placed on the achievement of more equitable, particularly gender equitable, conservation. However there is inexperience and a lack of knowledge concerning how to achieve this, particularly within the conservation context. Furthermore, conservation organisations, due to their technocratic and natural science-based roots, have struggled with such an integration of social issues.

The *'Engendering' Eden* research programme aimed to fill some of the gaps on gender, women and ICDPs[1]. It aimed to achieve a better understanding of the linkages between gender issues and ICDPs and indicate ways forward to achieve a more equitable and 'successful' conservation and development process. The central objective was to provide an assessment of the role of gender for enhancing the social and environmental sustainability of ICDPs, and to develop a more empirical understanding of how gender shapes the ways local people participate, invest in and benefit from them.

The programme focussed on six sets of key questions:

1. What gender differences/inequities exist in local communities involved in ICDPs? What other social divisions are important in relation to natural resource use and its conservation?

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[1] A distinction is made between ICDPs (integrated conservation and development projects) and CBNRM (community based natural resource management). ICDPs are viewed to be project-oriented and more conservation focussed – usually linking local development with the conservation of a National Park or other protected area. CBNRM is more of a movement or process of increasing community 'ownership' over and use of natural resources in a sustainable manner and which contributes to their development. This includes resources that exist outside protected areas and thus is less geographically defined. Enabling legislation must exist for CBNRM to work. This research project focussed on ICDPs though important lessons were learnt from CBNRM.

2. How do these differences/inequities affect the way men and women participate in, contribute to, and benefit from ICDPs?

3. To what extent, and how, are these gender differences being addressed and accounted for in the planning, implementation and evaluation of ICDPs?

4. Where gender issues/inequities have been addressed, which methods have been successful and which have not? To what degree are other social divisions important? What lessons can be learnt?

5. Where gender issues/inequities have *not* been addressed, what are the implications for project 'success'? What lessons can be learnt?

6. How successful is the ICDP model in addressing gender inequities in relation to poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation? Should changes or adjustments be made to achieve more successful links between conservation and a more *equitable* development of local communities? How can the ICDP process be more effectively guided and achieved?

The research was carried out between 2000 and 2002. Two regional studies were made: Africa, and South and South-East Asia. A number of ICDPs were visited and gender assessments carried out. The results are published in two volumes: *'Engendering' Eden, Volume II: Women, Gender and ICDPs in Africa: Lessons Learnt and Experiences Shared* and *'Engendering' Eden, Volume III. Women, Gender and ICDPs in South and South-East Asia: Lessons Learnt and Experiences Shared.* The overall experiences and lessons learnt from these two regional studies are synthesised and analysed in this summary document.

1.5 ICDPS: AN INTRODUCTION

There is no strict formula for what constitutes an ICDP. Activities can range widely. However, Hughes and Flintan (2001), in a review of the ICDP literature, found that the following features are common:

- Biodiversity conservation is the primary goal.
- There is a recognised need to address the social and economic requirements of communities who might otherwise threaten biodiversity, and the natural resource base in general.
- The core objective is to improve relationships between state-managed protected areas and their neighbours or inhabitants.
- ICDPs do not necessarily seek to devolve control or ownership of protected area resources to local communities, or to address this issue on the periphery of the parks.
- ICDPs usually receive (and often rely on) funding from external sources, such as bilateral or multilateral donors and international conservation organisations.
- The majority of ICDPs are externally motivated and are initiated by conservation organisations and/or development agencies (even if implemented by governmental bodies).
- They are generally linked to a protected area: more often than not, a National Park.

Three assumptions underpin the objectives of all ICDPs today. These are:

- Diversified local livelihood options will reduce human pressure on biodiversity, leading to its improved conservation.
- Local people and their livelihood practices, rather than 'external factors' comprise the most important threat to biodiversity resources of the area in question.
- ICDPs offer sustainable alternatives to traditional protectionist approaches to protected area management.

Recently there has been a move away from ICDPs based on inflexible management plans, towards approaches which place more emphasis on 'learning whilst doing' and 'adaptive management'. Increasingly, the importance of social equity issues (including gender) is being realised.

A key factor in the long-term success of ICDPs is establishing linkages between the conservation of resources and the development of local communities. This needs to be achieved firstly at the project level and secondly, but perhaps more importantly, by the local communities themselves. If they can understand and believe that their long-term security and development is dependent upon more sustainable resource use and the protection of the environment, then a key step in ICDP success will have been taken. The next step would be when communities' actions reflect, and are based upon, such an understanding and belief.

2. GENDER DIFFERENCES AND RELATIONSHIPS

2.1 COLLECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Men and women in both Africa and Asia, and particularly those from poorer households, can still be highly dependent on the collection of natural resources for fulfilling household needs and as a contribution to food security and poverty alleviation. In Africa this can prove critical in times of drought and other environmental and political crises.

The collection of such resources is gender-differentiated in relation to socio-economical, cultural, ethnic and geographical contexts. For example, in Africa fuelwood collection is dominated by women, whilst in Asia men are also often involved. Environmental degradation and change have limited communities' access to resources. Due to women's greater reliance on the collection of resources on a day-to-day basis, such limitation has had a greater negative impact on them, resulting in the need for increased time and physical input.

Though men are more involved in commercial enterprises, women also sell and trade in natural resources. Such trade can be dominated either by richer groups who have better access to urban markets and transport networks further a field, or by poorer groups who tend to sell to local markets. Women are becoming increasingly involved in the processing of natural resources as opportunities are opened up for the diversification of livelihoods, particularly when such processing can be carried out close to home and/or when spare time is available. Such work is often carried out in collective groups. In some cases men have undermined women's use of resources as they have been further integrated into the cash economy.

In Africa, culture and ethnicity can also play a significant role in defining relationships with natural resources. In Asia, caste can be a more important factor. Religion is also highly influential. For example Buddhism emphasises a strong respect for nature and encourages its protection and many Christian churches protect forests and woodlands. In addition marital status, age, wealth and social status can all play a role in creating divisions within communities and community groups. These differences do not only influence relationships with the environment but also influence engagement in ICDPs and development activities.

Both men and women hold extensive knowledge about the natural resources that they collect and their various uses. Men dominate the hunting of wildlife. However there are examples in both Africa, mainly in areas of West Africa where trade in bushmeat is high, and in some parts of Asia, where women have played a more active role. Women tend to have a greater knowledge about plants, fruits and grasses. Protected areas remain a major source of natural resources.

2.2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INEQUITIES

Women have less access to education and healthcare and fewer economic opportunities. Women are also less mobile and tend to be most active around the household. Though it is usual in Asia for women to be physically responsible for household cash, they still do not tend to control household decision-making. In addition women have an almost total lack of security of resources such as land and financial capital. In Africa in particular, societies confer only secondary, usufruct rights to women. Women are normally entitled to cultivate land controlled by their husband's lineage but not to alienate or inherit it. Men control nearly all the property and decisions relating to it. This is proving increasingly problematic as greater numbers of women are assuming the position of household head in place of their

husbands who are migrating to find better opportunities for work: the women still do not have the power to make many of the decisions necessary for land use management. Without security and control, women are less able or willing to invest in conservation practices.

Women's share of decision-making power at both macro and micro levels remains low: it is still dominated by men. In Africa in particular there is a lack of organised platforms from which to address women's issues. In general, women are compromised by power structures that are heavily loaded in favour of men. Women may be farmers, but they are rarely field managers. This is particularly true in Islamic regions where culture and religion deny women participation in public life. Exceptions do exist however, for example in Bhutan women have a legally protected equal status to men. Many mountain communities also tend to be more egalitarian.

Low self-image and a lack of confidence amongst women are contributing factors to their lack of involvement in decision-making processes. Their contribution to society and environmental protection is highly undervalued. Not only is there a lack of political will to change gender inequities (despite enabling and supportive policy development), but women themselves have accepted their subordinate status. In addition women find less time to attend meetings due to their multiple daily commitments to the household and family.

Women, rather than men, tend to be more willing to form cooperatives and self-mobilise as a group to share responsibilities, provide support, and even to initiate change. Women have seen the advantage of 'group power'. They will often attend meetings *en masse* and sit together in a group where they feel less vulnerable. Single women, particularly those divorced or widowed, tend to be more mobile, confident and able to participate in activities. In many countries there are strong networks of women's groups or self-help groups and/or government supported Women's Associations. Though they offer good opportunities as a foundation for more formal institutions that could be involved in conservation activities and provide space for a focus on women's interests and needs, their contribution has yet to be fully recognised and utilised.

2.3 GENDER, WOMEN AND CONSERVATION

Poverty and pressures to fulfil daily household needs are major constraints for women in terms of finding time or resources to invest in conservation and environmental practises. Women tend to prioritise on a short-term basis. This tends to conflict directly with conservation and environmental objectives that are more long-term in nature. While male and female interests with regard to environmental management and biodiversity conservation may be compatible, this is not always the case. As such, a sensitive institutional understanding of gender relations is critical.

Conservation policy and practice often focuses, at least in the short-term, on a restriction on resource use through protective measures such as the creation of a protected area and the establishment of a group of enforcers. Because both women and men living in rural areas are often heavily reliant on the local natural resources, such conservation measures can have immediate detrimental costs. Women, who are more reliant than men on such resources for fulfilling the everyday needs of the household, can experience more negative impacts. They are likely to bear the costs to a greater extent through the increased effort involved in gathering resources from alternative sites and/or risk being caught whilst attempting to continue collection illegally.

Where consultations have been carried out with local communities concerning the development of protected areas and conservation policies, the discussions tend to have been dominated by those with more voice and power in the communities: the men. Women and their views and/or needs have been marginalised. As a result such views or needs have not been incorporated into conservation developments, which then have tended to have a more adverse impact on women than men. In addition, support for related activities tends to be focussed on male activities rather then female, as most jobs produced as a result of conservation are male dominated, such as community game guards and scouts. This is particularly the case in Africa where in the past community-based conservation has mainly focussed on community wildlife management. This has promoted the involvement of men, whilst marginalising women.

As a result, although community-based conservation and forestry can be beneficial, unless pre-existing socio-cultural inequality is taken into account, they will only serve to widen the gap in terms of access rights and unequal division of labour.

3. WOMEN, GENDER AND ICDPS

3.1 LACK OF CONCERN FOR GENDER ISSUES IN ICDPS

Few ICDPs in both Africa and Asia have actively addressed gender issues. Some projects have recognised in hindsight that costly mistakes could have been avoided if gender issues had been better understood and considered during project design and before implementation had begun. Some projects plan to rectify the situation by redoing some of the initial feasibility studies to address gender issues.

However 'adding on' a gender component is not likely to provide as positive results as would have been achieved by integrating gender from the very beginning. Indeed, ICDPs still fail to approach gender issues in any strategic way. Instead they normally rely on addressing problems in an uninformed and haphazard manner as they arise and/or the enthusiasm and concerns of individuals.

A minority of ICDPs have provided gender training for staff. At the field level, the majority of staff act on instinct rather than on a comprehensive understanding of constraints, problems and solutions. Where gender training has been carried out staff tend to take a more comprehensive, informed and successful approach to overcoming problems and inequities. Yet even here, a failure to follow-up and monitor impacts from a gender perspective means that gender issues are often forgotten or side-lined.

This lack of consideration and incorporation of gender differences and issues has resulted in a number of negative impacts which are discussed in more detail in the regional studies. These include:

1. Misunderstanding and mistrust between conservation authorities, development organisations and communities, particularly amongst women.

Because women are marginalised from conservation processes they are unaware of legislation, rules and regulations and do not understand why they have been introduced. They may not be aware of the opportunities that ICDPs have opened up for them. In addition a significant gap can be found between the cultures of development organisations and the cultures of the communities they work with. Conflict has arisen due to ill-informed and badly-advised ICDP interventions.

In addition, men can prove resistant to women's participation in conservation and development. They may feel threatened, or concerned that women's domestic roles and responsibilities will be neglected if they take part.

Several women's projects have been started and then discontinued (for example within the LIRDP, Zambia). This has resulted in increased feelings of insecurity and lack of faith in ICDPs. The reasons for their discontinuation are varied but include a lack of funding, change of staff and a lack of commitment to women's issues.

2. Conflicting needs and priorities and a lack of participation.

The different needs of men and women, together with their different relationships with the environment and natural resources, have been summarised above. These manifest themselves in diverse views and perceptions of the value of resources and the environment, and the costs and benefits of using and/or protecting them. Such views and perceptions are rarely fully understood or incorporated into ICDPs.

Despite existing legislation supporting a more equitable participation of women in decision-making processes concerned with natural resource use, in reality women play little role. Not only are required numbers/quotas rarely met but also the quality of women's participation must be questioned. Many conservation staff see the involvement of women as a mere formality. Their potential contribution is highly undervalued. Women's 'participation' is desirable only as a less risky and more effective mechanism for persuading them to stop resource extraction.

Where such differences and lack of participation have been ignored, adverse impacts have often occurred. Conflicts have arisen during reforestation programmes because men and women prioritise the need for certain varieties differently. In addition, it is more often women who have to cope with increased conflicts with wildlife, for example whilst collecting water or firewood. As a result women have been less supportive of ICDPs and less willing to give up time and resources to contribute to them. Consequently, the success of ICDPs may have been compromised.

Within ICDPs there is little genuine addressing of gender inequities in local communities. Traditional gender-unbalanced structures remain untouched. Marginalised women remain un-empowered and uninvolved. Furthermore, analyses of women's resource needs continue to attempt the separation of women's resource use interests from their wider social relationships and therefore risk further entrenching existing gender inequalities.

3. Increased gender inequalities.

Indeed in some projects the exclusion of women or a lack of gender awareness has had very clear detrimental effects on women, not least by increasing the gender inequalities that already existed. For example a number of opportunities have been opened up for men but not women, including increased roles in decision-making processes and access to economic and educational options. As such, men have tended to benefit more directly from ICDPs than women. In addition it is common for women and men to experience different trade-offs and transaction costs when getting involved in, and giving up time for, conservation projects and practices. For women, the costs are often greater than those for men.

4. Overlooking women's roles, rights and responsibilities.

Because gender issues have not been taken into account by many ICDPs, women's roles and rights have been overlooked. Projects have focussed on what have been wrongly perceived to be 'community roles' but in fact tend to be those dominated by men. In addition the dynamic, flexible and adaptive nature of such roles has not been understood or accounted for.

In ignoring women's roles and rights, women's responsibilities have also been marginalised. Indeed few women link rights to resources with responsibilities for them. As such, women's contribution has been highly undervalued and opportunities have been missed for more successful natural resource management and conservation. It should be noted that assuming what men's roles and responsibilities are without a full understanding of them can also prove problematic.

3.2 BRINGING WOMEN INTO THE EQUATION – POLICY AND ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT

As the missed opportunities and negative impacts of women's marginalisation from ICDPs have been recognised, conservation and development organisations have, to varying degrees, placed increased emphasis on more equitable development and, in some instances, a mainstreaming of gender into policy and projects.

For example, IUCN has a comprehensive gender policy and work programme for mainstreaming gender throughout the organisation and its work (see Box 3.1). IUCN's Social Policy Unit based at Head Quarters in Geneva (including a Gender Policy Advisor) together with regional offices, such as Meso-American Regional Office - ORMA, has been particularly active in promoting gender awareness and inclusion. ORMA has recently produced a series of practical guides to incorporating and accounting for gender issues throughout ICDPs and protected area management (see Recommended Texts).

However, other conservation organisations have failed to mainstream gender to any great extent. Ironically these tend to be those organisations that are more directly involved in the implementation of projects on the ground. As a result, by overlooking how social relations of gender influence environmental resource use and conservation, policies have failed to match up to the difficulties of involving women in projects ostensibly designed for their benefit. Not surprisingly, projects have often fallen short in implementation and have failed to benefit women as intended. In consequence they have often also failed to meet their objectives of improved conservation.

Indeed, though an external evaluation of TNC (The Nature Conservancy) in the late 1990s stressed the importance of incorporating gender issues, and there is an emphasis on the inclusion of women in some projects, there is no general policy/strategy to guide them (Rojas, undated; Mogelgaard, 2002).

Likewise, WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature - International, UK and US) has failed to develop anything substantial or strategic beyond initial discussions on women's marginalisation, a handful of consultations carried out over the last decade (see for example, Field, 1994), and expressions of concern from individuals. Some moves have been made on a more practical level, such as WWF-US' 'Women and Conservation Initiative' launched in 1993, but from an institutional point of view little has been done to take an emphasis on gender forward: no formal policy on gender exists. As a result gender issues tend to be addressed only when problems arise when individuals show particular concern or interest and/or when donors apply pressure. As such this tends to occur in a haphazard and reactionary fashion.

The more development-oriented organisations involved in ICDPs, such as CARE, have, in the majority of cases, well-structured and comprehensive gender policies as well as gender focal persons. More recently CARE has moved towards 'rights-based programming' and application of a gender perspective within ICDPs is stated as a priority (CARE, 2001). Gender and environment linkages tend to focus less on biodiversity conservation and protected area management, but more on development, poverty alleviation and human rights. As such they would appear to be in a better position to address gender issues in a more strategic, planned and, in all likelihood, successful manner. However, to what extent these can aid the sustainable establishment of linkages between conservation and development is not yet clear. From the experience of ICDPs in the past, linking such a strong focus on development and rights issues to the conservation of resources may well prove difficult.

10

Additionally some national offices of conservation organisations have moved forward in developing their own gender policies. For example WWF Nepal has developed its own policy and strategies which have been valuable in guiding the gender mainstreaming process that is currently being carried out. How well this is achieved and for example, reflected in work on the ground, is yet to be seen.

Box 3.1 IUCN's Gender Policy.

IUCN first began the process of integrating women and gender issues into its policies in 1984, culminating in the endorsement of a Gender Policy Statement (see IUCN Website, 1998a; IUCN, 1998) and the instigation of a Work Programme in 1998 (see IUCN Website, 1998b). IUCN's rationale for integrating gender perspectives and concerns is based on two premises:

"first, the recognition that gender equality and equity are matters of fundamental human rights and social justice; and secondly, the growing awareness that equality - equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities for men and women - is a pre-condition for sustainable development and sustainable use of natural resources" (ibid).

Each IUCN Regional Office has identified and formally appointed gender focal points who are responsible for taking regional work programmes forward. As part of their Social Policy Programme, IUCN has developed the 'Alliance for Change.' This alliance is expected to help counter the challenges that organisations face when trying to implement gender-based programs, such as:
- i) Addressing institutional dynamics that resist change.
- ii) Understanding gender as a mainstreaming process.
- iii) Lack of skills.
- iv) Limited access to methodologies and tools.
- v) Lack of funding.

By working through this alliance IUCN hopes that gender equity and understanding in the workplace will foster more successful environmental and social projects in the field. Some proposals have been developed to address the linkages between gender, sustainable livelihoods, and demographic strategies at the local level and their implication for conservation and natural resources management. The Alliance for Change seeks to foster gender equality and understanding within the ranks of its own organisational staff, in the hope that this will translate into better, more gender-equitable conservation projects in the field.

(Mogelgaard, 2002; IUCN, 1998.)

3.3 PROJECT PLANNING

The majority of ICDPs have not sought the views and interests of all stakeholders, including women, within their design and planning. Though some socio-economic surveys, and more rarely gender-sensitive surveys, have taken place, these and the involvement of gender consultants tend to be short-term and 'one-off'.

Consequently, though suggestions and inputs might be made at the beginning of a project on issues such as gender, this is not continued through to the project's conclusion. Gender still tends to be marginalised as 'more important' problems and 'more pressing' issues arise. It is more often than not an added-on feature (due to personal interest or donor demand), rather than something strategically planned for and valued.

3.4 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION - 'WOMEN'S PROJECTS'

Despite the lack of strategic frameworks or gender policies, and due to the realisation that women were, in fact, missing out from ICDPs, a range of women's projects have been

initiated that seek to overcome some of the inequities and differences that exist in beneficiary communities.

These are based on the assumption that when projects meet women's immediate needs, women are more forthcoming and are able to effectively manage their time to include conservation activities. Such elements of ICDPs tend to emphasise a 'welfare approach' focussing on women in their capacity as mothers and carers - seen as central to social and economic development as well as environmental protection. It identifies women, as opposed to a lack of resources or access, as being the problem. Consequently, projects tend to target women's perceived practical needs as opposed to their strategic needs.

The main categories of women's projects that are implemented through ICDPs are those related to:
- Health provision and family planning.
- Income generation.
- Credit and savings schemes.

In general these project components are considered to be of secondary importance to ICDPs' main activities. Their budget allocation is therefore scarce and few have made any real impact on the achievement of protected area objectives. However they have offered opportunities for women to benefit economically and, in some instances, socially too. As such they have played a role in poverty alleviation within local communities and have contributed to their development.

These projects and their components are discussed in detail within the two regional studies. Here, the key issues have been drawn out, and the lessons learnt summarised.

3.4.1 Health Provision and Family Planning

A number of NGOs have provided support for health provision and/or family planning services through ICDPs. It has proved important to work with local partners such as national health- or gender-focussed NGOs and government agencies. Capacity and technical training have also been provided in the form of improving and expanding local family planning information and service delivery, and the training of family planning practitioners and educators. Such schemes are more popular in Africa than Asia, and may often form part of wider development support.

In addition a number of initiatives (described in more detail in McDonald, 2002) have been set up at an organisation level. These include:
- Conservation International's *Healthy Communities Initiative* initiated in 1997;
- WWF-US' initiative *Taking a Closer Look at Population and Gender* which produced a set of recommendations for action in the population-environment arena, centred on areas such as field action, advocacy, partnerships, and M&E.

There remains uncertainty about the connection between population growth in poor rural communities and resource use, as wealthy populations with low rates of growth tend to have higher rates of resource consumption. Migration also contributes significantly to population growth, though its dynamics are rarely understood.

It is difficult to measure the impacts on resource use and biodiversity conservation of health and population initiatives. However there is evidence to suggest that such projects do not necessarily help communities to make the conceptual link between development (health

support) and conservation. One must therefore question the sustainability of such initiatives, and whether they should be included under the rubric of ICDPs.

3.4.2 Income Generation

Many ICDPs in both Africa and Asia focus specifically on women in their support of income-generating activities with the aim of increasing their economic and social autonomy. Many women tend to be more easily mobilised; be more credit-worthy; have a greater entrepreneurial spirit than men and often make better traders and marketers. In addition, by involving women as a socio-economic classification or unit of the community there tends to be a natural cross-section available that transcends other socio-economic and political divisions. In addition they usually stay in villages year-round and thus can follow through with activities and responsibilities. However, women may face constraints in accessing capital and finding time for activities, and may be handicapped by poor literacy and skills.

Some ICDPs, particularly those in areas of large wildlife, concentrate their efforts on raising income through tourism and sport hunting. The income is then distributed to the local communities. Problems remain in achieving a fair and decentralised distribution of monies, but in general communities as a whole do benefit. However, where income is allocated to community projects women often find that their priorities are not taken into account and thus projects tend to be more focussed on men's needs rather than women's.

The support and formation of women's groups can form an intricate part of income-generating projects. The advantages of such groups will be discussed in more detail below. Their formalisation (e.g. through establishing a selected committee and a constitution) can increase their sustainability.

The importance of training in skills development as well as in business and bookkeeping has been recognised and often forms a complementary component of income-generating schemes. It has been found that women may need a large amount of support and training before such schemes prove successful. Not only may the necessary skills be lacking, but the concept of formal organisation that is required may also be alien. In societies where the involvement of women in business is not common, it may be up to one or two women to act as role models or path breakers and prove the opportunities open to women before others feel comfortable enough to join in.

ICDPs tend to be located in rural areas, often isolated, with few local services and limited access to markets. Where income-generation involves the production of goods such as handicrafts, more investment and time needs to be spent in locating sustainable markets and in identifying ways to add value to goods. In addition a product control system may be necessary to maintain standards and regulate supplies. Where projects rely on the continued use of certain resources, such as palms for making handicrafts, a monitoring system controlling sustainable use should be supported. A good example of such systems can be found in the Namibian CBNRM programme described in the Africa regional study.

It is unclear to what extent such projects affect the reduction of natural resource use. It is suggested that small-scale efforts are unlikely to achieve great impacts except in a few specific areas. Still, enterprise projects can provide important entry points to communities and increase receptivity to conservation messages. But they must be embedded and linked to gender issues if they are to achieve anything more than short-term economic benefits. Otherwise they will be little more than a token gesture to appease donors and/or guilty consciences that have recognised that women are being left out of conservation and development processes.

13

Though there is evidence to suggest that women do benefit from such projects, exactly to what degree this is true is rarely explored. For example it is unclear how much control women have over the income raised; whether they decide how it is spent or whether their husbands do and what the money is used for. This can be an important factor in women's empowerment. The impacts of commercialisation also need to be better understood and accounted for.

3.4.3 Micro-Finance Schemes

Micro-finance schemes, including savings and credit schemes, have been offered in conjunction with income-generation projects. In the majority of cases these are targeted towards women who are prejudiced against under 'normal' circumstances, for example the need for collateral to which they usually do not have access. Project-supported schemes often revoke the need for collateral and offer more flexible terms of contract. However, they may feel the need to compensate for this by requiring higher interest rates and by tying the loans to terms of condition, such as what the money can be invested in and/or agreements to stop environmentally damaging activities.

Such schemes often assume that women are a better investment for targeted support, as they are believed to be more credit worthy and/or responsible, and more easily mobilised. In Asia in particular, women may be viewed as household financial 'managers'. However, though this may allow ICDPs to capitalise on women's recognised role and to support women with less risk of damaging social relations, it is not clear to what degree this really benefits them. As described above, it is unclear what control women maintain over financial transactions and related decision-making processes. In addition, some have questioned whether women actually prioritise money above other less economic needs.

In fact it has been shown that micro-credit schemes can provide a number of social benefits highly valued by women, often above and beyond 'money'. Most schemes include attendance at monthly meetings which provide an opportunity for women to meet, exchange views, problems and solutions, and often act as a strong means of support. Some women have also stated that the schemes provide some order to their lives, which otherwise tend to be complex and overburdened. Evidence also suggests that women's self-esteem and pride have increased. If it is these benefits rather than the economic that women value, then the emphasis on increasing incomes may be misplaced. And perhaps such social benefits could be achieved through other, more suitable means.

Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that, rather than solving them, credit schemes in particular can increase poverty and/or household monetary problems. Case study work has showed that in certain schemes, loans had been tied to investment in livestock. This has proved to be high-risk: in Vietnam, for example, the livestock bought died through disease. As a result the borrowers were left with a substantial debt and no capital. Alternative, less monetary-focussed schemes do exist and may be a better alternative. WWF, for example, has initiated quite innovative arrangements such as the 'borrow a cow, give a cow' scheme (see Africa regional study).

In addition other problems may arise. The poorest of the poor are likely to miss out; banking principles and their application are often impractical and alien to many people; economic impacts are often not very positive; and though livelihood integration and conservation of resources should be linked to the savings and credit scheme, usually they are not: the projects stand alone.

Still, in several projects, micro-credit is seen as valuable support for women to create opportunities to diversify their livelihoods, move away from a reliance on natural resources and/or enable them to afford alternatives for essentials such as local fuelwood. ICDPs anticipate that women will understand that the provision of support (by means such as micro-credit) is tied to better conservation practices. However establishing the links between such development-focussed elements of projects and conservation is difficult, even more difficult than elements based more directly on natural resource use. As such, again, one can question whether these projects should actually be called ICDPs or, more realistically, community development projects. Indeed, evidence from this research programme suggests that few beneficiaries of ICDPs understand this link or have changed their attitudes and behaviours as a result of it. Without forging linkages between conservation and development the long-term sustainability of ICDPs is unlikely to be achieved.

3.5 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION - GENDER MAINSTREAMING

> *"Mainstreaming means paying constant attention to equality between women and men in development, policies, strategies and operations"* (Aguilar, 1999:5).

As suggested at the beginning of this section, in recent years ICDPs have moved forward (albeit to a small degree) in developing women's inclusion through gender-focussed, rather than women-focussed, activities. It has been recognised that to do so, men must be involved as well as women. However, many initiatives incorporate gender as a separate component that has no connection to the different areas of the project's basic activities. This can fragment and isolate the issues from the rest of the project and often requires additional resources. It is unlikely that such efforts can have a real impact on addressing gender equity and the relations of subordination that may exist as they allow little room for positive transformation processes.

In addition there remains widespread misunderstanding of the distinction between gender and exclusively women-centred approaches. Even when gender is integrated at a conceptual level, this is not reflected in programme strategies and project implementation. Women are still separated into a 'disadvantaged group', which encourages the belief that their problems are related to their disadvantage - that is, because they are women. Rather, women should be seen as a part of society as a whole. Their problems are social (not 'women's' problems), related to their status in society and their relationship with men. Projects should address both the disadvantage (in the short-term) and the reasons it exists (in the long-term) (Field, 1994).

It should be recognised however that though a gender approach is advocated (ie that which includes both men and women) there still may be cause for singling women out as a group to be targeted, particularly where gender inequities are high.

There is certainly a need for more women to work in conservation and ICDPs, however it should be realised that women (as staff members) do not necessarily advocate and support gender issues any more than men. In fact they may feel under pressure not to appear too feminist and consequently over-compensate by ignoring women's and gender issues altogether. Many professional women do not want to be publicly identified with gender concerns, which they perceive as a sectional agenda, even if they do adopt a more gendered stance in private.

Having said that, where gender issues have been addressed in depth it has often relied on processes being initiated by key supportive and enthusiastic individuals who are, more often than not, women. In fact the most successful ICDPs in terms of incorporating and benefiting women (identified by this research programme), have all been led by women: highly motivated women concerned with promoting a more just and equitable conservation process.

The majority of governments in developing countries have initiated policies that actively support more equity between men and women. Some have taken this one step further and directly linked such support to women's role in NRM with policies calling for gender equity within resource 'ownership', management and benefit-sharing. Conservation and development organisations should be more aware of such policies; use them as a foundation on which to develop more gender equitable policies and strategies; enter policy dialogues relevant to conservation; and work with and, if necessary, build up the capacity of local institutions to promote the opportunities that they present. Organisations involved in ICDPs, particularly those who are really serious about addressing gender inequities, should play a more active role in related advocacy work that would encourage and support their interventions.

Mainstreaming gender issues still proves difficult, even within more aware and amenable contexts. In Nepal, the community forestry movement has had government support from the early 1990s and from the outset the role of women was recognised. Yet despite this gender issues are still marginalised and women's concerns are usually an 'add-on' element. There is room for optimism however, and lessons learnt from ICDPs that have more positively supported gender issues provide some indication of more successful ways forward. Key focus areas of these projects have been:
- Women's empowerment.
- Education and training.
- Collective action and women's groups.
- Conservation and natural resource management.

3.5.1 Women's Empowerment

> "Empowerment is a process whereby people gain increasing power and control over their lives. It involves awareness, self-confidence, broadening of options and opportunities, and increasing access to, and control of, resources. Empowerment comes from 'inside', from the individuals themselves, it cannot be granted by others." (SIDA, 1997 in Aguilar et al., 2002).

It is only recently that ICDPs have attempted to understand and/or tackle the power dynamics prevalent in communities which may contribute to the inequitable relations found there. This has compromised the long-term sustainability of ICDPs, particularly once implementing organisations have withdrawn. Other opportunities have also been lost – there is evidence to suggest that when access to resources and household food and livelihoods are secure, women (and men) are more likely to invest in conservation activities. Additionally, improving women's status and progress toward gender equity and equality is given as one of the key factors leading to reduced fertility and, by extension, mitigating population pressures on natural resources.

Pressures are placed on ICDPs, particularly from donors, to achieve short-term results. There is not enough time or resources to invest in longer-term issues such as the promotion of women's rights. Often male members of households obtain security but women do not. For example the issuing of land titles (or other titled rights to resources) will, in the

majority of cases, be made to the household heads: usually the men. Gender inequities and their impacts are not addressed or taken into account. This can create a number of problems, particularly in areas where out-migration of males (be it on a temporary or more permanent basis) has meant that women have increasingly been left to manage the land. Without titles and a higher degree of control and security over land their ability or investment in conservation may be undermined.

Box 3.2 The Dynamics of Power

"Power for women is seen as generative, as 'power to'; power for men is termed as 'power over'. If men remain reluctant to relinquish this 'power over' then women's attempts at developing their 'power to' may ultimately be constrained. The inherent conflict between women's and men's experiences of em(power)ment ('power to' versus 'power over') suggests that the 'real' empowerment of women remains a problematic issue."

(Mercer, 1999)

Indeed a focus of JFM in India (see Asia regional review) has been the promotion of women's rights and their awareness of them. In some areas of traditional suppression women who have been made more aware of their rights have managed to carve a respectful space for themselves in male dominated societies. Frequent participation in meetings and constant interaction with village members as well as outsiders on issues other than family matters has increased their confidence. The 'empowerment' of women has also led to their participation in various other social activities and movements such as those focussing on anti-alcohol and the environment.

Household relations including those between men and women, as well as local norms and gender roles, are all part of peoples' central belief and value systems. These systems are dynamic and constantly adapting to both external and internal factors. However, change should not be imposed from outside. Change is more meaningful and sustainable when it occurs on a community's own terms, within their time frame and facilitated by internal agents. Women as well as men are these internal agents and outside agencies/organisations can serve to guide and assist them.

Box 3.3 Steps Towards Equality Between Men and Women:

1. Welfare (basic survival).
2. Access to resources (including opportunities for self-realisation).
3. Conscientisation (an awareness of and will to alter gender inequalities).
4. Participation (including an equal role in decision-making).
5. Control (in both the personal and public domains).

A broad distinction can be made between having *access* to a resource, that is the opportunity to make use of something, and having *control* over a resource, that is the ability to define its use. For example, women may have access to employment, but no control over how the earned income is spent. NRM policies have increasingly sought to emphasise the role of community participation in controlling resource use through management. However the rhetoric of decentralisation is frustrated by power brokers (vested interests) at the local level who do not want to share decision-making authority with the community in general, and least of all with women resource-users.

To really begin facilitating the empowerment of women, ICDPs must be prepared to go further than assisting women with their daily needs and survival. Instead they must aim to provide them with skills, knowledge, confidence and social cohesion to determine the

development path they wish to follow and to challenge the structures in society that oppress them. More 'subtle' strategies that do not create wide-spread dissent may be more useful than confrontational ones (Scheyvens, 1998).

Time must be invested in developing an understanding that men's interests need not be diametrically opposed to those of women and that by 'empowering' women both men and women are likely to benefit in the long-term. In addition support should be given to women in order to improve their ability to negotiate their rights and influence management decisions.

3.5.2 Education and Training

In both Africa and Asia more women are illiterate than men. In addition, although women may have a good knowledge concerning the resources that they use they tend to have a poorer understanding of environmental processes and the long-term impact of unsustainable use. It has been shown that effective participation will only be possible once women have the appropriate knowledge and skills to undertake activities.

As a result a number of ICDPs see literacy initiatives and girls' scholarships as long-term investments in women's capacities, with the conservation pay-offs coming over both the short and long term. These may include increased, effective participation of girls and women in conservation activities and management; better understanding and acceptance of conservation messages and sharing of these messages with children, male partners and others in the community; and for young women, the likelihood of smaller, healthier families. At the same time heightened education can build up women's self-confidence and self-esteem to a degree that they feel more comfortable and confident to participate in community and conservation decision-making .

Increasingly, and especially in Africa, it is being realised that the education of girls is as important as that for boys, if not a basic right. In many cases it is now being considered a worthwhile investment for future household security.

In addition, such initiatives can provide important entry points to the community and useful spaces to disseminate environmental messages. Women have the potential to play a central role in environmental education because their intimate relationship with communities and families provides an ideal conduit for the diffusion of environmental messages. Literacy and scholarship initiatives clearly linked to conservation messages and activities seem to hold great promise for positively impacting conservation.

Indeed, education has proved a powerful tool for increasing women's capacity and, to some extent, empowering them. A key example is found in Nepal where several ICDPs have included literacy classes as a central component. Evidence suggests that many women have benefited from the classes and are playing an increased role in community life and conservation/development as a result.

However it is often the case that once girls or women have been educated they want to leave rural areas to make the most of greater opportunities elsewhere. It is important therefore that either ways must be found to develop opportunities in rural areas that will encourage them to stay, or linkages are established between those who leave and those left behind.

In both Africa and Asia some ICDPs have supported the building of schools. However, local communities rarely recognise the link between such components and the conservation of natural resources. Often people will not know that the relevant NGO has built the school,

and if so, why. Though some might suggest that such anonymity is a good thing, if the objectives of ICDPs are really going to be achieved then communities need to recognise the linkages between development (and support, for instance through school-building) and conservation.

Linking support to schools with conservation can be achieved to some extent by encouraging the establishment of school environmental/conservation- or eco-clubs. A large number of ICDPs have sponsored these through providing materials such as books, day-trips, tree seedlings to establish nurseries and by organising 'conservation' events. Cultivating good relationships between children, the environment and wildlife from early ages can be seen as a long-term investment in environmental protection and conservation.

Training also forms a part of some ICDP programmes, for example in agricultural and forestry techniques, as does capacity building (including forest management, gender sensitisation, leadership building, enhancing decision making capacity and financial and administrative management). As described above, training can also be linked to health and population initiatives, income-generation and credit and savings. However, it can prove difficult firstly to encourage women's attendance and secondly, to find female trainers and/or extension workers. This can be for a number of reasons including a lack of education; lack of mobility; lack of respect; and for health reasons.

The use of village mobilisers is a useful tool - that is, training selected potential trainers who can return to their villagers, carry out further trainings and act as the node for mobilising groups and the link between the communities and the project.

Ideally, education, training and extension services should be demand (client) led and focussed. They should fill the gaps as identified by the potential beneficiaries and their provision should fit in with participation opportunities. This would help to focus the supply of such services in a more gender sensitive manner. In Nepal, for example, the timings of the literacy classes had to coincide with the times when women were free to attend, that is when less busy with household duties or livelihood activities. The technical capabilities of women and their enthusiasm for learning if given the opportunity should not be underestimated.

3.5.3 Women's Groups and Collective Action

Women find a voice and strength through collective action. Promoting women's participation through women's groups proves highly successful. It may be the case that income generation projects by themselves do not necessarily give women control over income earned or increase their access to resources. However, the process of participating in all stages of mobilisation, organisation and attendant meetings can contribute towards an increasing awareness levels; developing leadership skills; facilitating collective articulation of women's interests and concerns; and offers opportunities for a shared capacity to effect change.

In addition there is evidence to suggest that women as a group are more able than individual women to access resources. This need not only apply to mobilising cash and credit, but also in securing access to land. In Tanzania for example, village committees were prepared to grant land, such as one acre tree plots, to women's groups but not to individual women.

Few ICDPs have fully recognised the potential of existing and, where necessary, new women's groups. Many are still in their infancy. As such there is a need for strong capacity-building programmes to enhance their knowledge base and skills. Some groups are already

involved in environmental activities, though the majority (particularly in Africa) focus more on 'self-help' and support for members in time of need, such as weddings and funerals, rather than a more formal mobilisation for specific tasks. In Asia there is a greater history of women's groups being supported and developed by governments. In Vietnam for example, the Women's Unions play a central role in local development including the implementation of a government credit scheme.

It is important that women's groups are more formalised if they are to remain sustainable once projects finish and/or are phased out. Clear policies should be developed by the group to cover, for example, conflict resolution, entry/exit into the groups, and rules and regulations regarding management and linkages.

In Nepal, the formation and support of 'mothers' groups' has proved a central component of most ICDPs. They are well structured with committees and management plans. It is believed that supporting and institutionalising the mothers groups or *Ama Samuha* or *Ama Toli* will enhance women's capabilities to improve their economic status and raise their participation in managing and conserving the natural resources. The 'mothers' groups' are so called regardless of the women's marital status. The word 'mother' is a less politically and socially contentious word than 'woman'. A gender assessment of a WWF-supported project there suggests that because of the Groups:

> *"the unity of women has increased and strengthened their own self-image as they now feel that they can achieve what they intend to do on their own. The members felt that they [have] a place to share and express their experiences and difficulties…now they are confident to talk with others freely and are able to voice out their opinions"* (Samanata, 2001b:5).

3.5.4 Conservation and Natural Resource Management

Some projects, and particularly forest projects, have made constructive attempts to involve women as well as men in NRM. Women-focussed activities include working in nurseries and reforestation projects. However much of this work may be mundane, labour intensive (such as the re-potting or planting of seedlings), whilst at the same time foster pre-defined and socially entrenched gender roles. It is uncommon for women to be supported in breaking free from such roles and for example, become forest managers. Therefore thought should be given as to whether such work/activities should be encouraged.

Women have also been the focus for alternative fuel projects, in an attempt to encourage households to move away from a reliance on wood. However for such schemes to really work, evidence suggests that the benefits of moving to the alternatives must outweigh the costs of continuing wood collection. For example in areas of Nepal where livelihoods are reasonably secure and income regular, the benefits of using alternative fuel such as gas, though expensive, outweigh the labour and time costs needed for wood collection.

Conversely, in parts of Africa with a higher level of poverty, where solar cookers have been introduced, they have done little to stem the use of fuelwood. Women rarely use the cookers as the cooking time is lengthy and the process still alien; the original investment in the cooker is high; the cookers need to be watched to prevent disturbance from animals; and the positive social aspects of food preparation and fuelwood collection (such as cooperation and time to talk) can be lost. In addition, though the collection of wood may be difficult, an adequate supply is still available, so there is little pressure to change. It remains to be seen whether as availability of firewood decreases, the benefits of moving to alternative fuels are better realised.

In Asia, women have traditionally played a more dominant role in the protection of forests and other natural resources than in Africa. There is a longer history of community participation in conservation activities and control over natural resources. This is particularly true in tribal or mountain areas where ethnic and cultural norms, as well as their socio-geographical context, have encouraged more gender equitable societies. Natural resource user groups tend to work best when populations are relatively stable and community members know each other.

Those projects that have progressed to a point where they have realised the need for increased community 'ownership' over, and involvement in, natural resource management processes tend to be those projects that have also recognised that 'community' is not equitable or homogenous. That is that *all* the community's contribution is important and that special efforts must be made to include marginal groups (including women).

The debate continues as to how best to achieve this, for example to what extent should women's inclusion be made a special case, and whether positive discrimination should be encouraged. Often traditional institutions are biased against women and thus, though they may certainly offer benefits e.g. for sustainability and utilising indigenous knowledge, from a gender equity perspective, they may not be the most suitable vehicle for community representation and decision-making.

Where women have been given long-term support, encouragement and opportunities to take a more active role in decision-making processes, they have slowly taken up the challenge. This has often been assisted by key role-models who have led women's participation, as well as a reliance on group power – that is women going to meetings as a group and once there, sitting together. In addition, time and effort are needed to establish when and where meetings concerned with NRM should be held to most positively encourage women to attend. Further incentives can prove useful such as providing child-minding services or combining meetings with other activities.

By focussing on user groups as the means for mobilising communities in conservation and NRM, some of the social constraints that inhibit women's participation can be overcome. For example it can prove less politically sensitive to bring women together because they are a user group (such as fuelwood collectors), rather then because they are women.

Reasonable success has been achieved in increasing the number of women on committees and in groups involved in conservation-related activities and decision-making processes. Particularly, this has been found to be the case in Asia where there is a longer history of more formalised community involvement and management of natural resources including forests. However, numbers do not necessarily equate to quality participation, and it has often been the case that although women appear on conservation committees, for example, they fail to participate to any extent as they lack skills and confidence to do so. Therefore, if women's representation is to be adequately achieved, support for their presence must be combined with support to build up their capacity to participate.

Few women are employed within conservation organisations and/or as ICDP staff in Africa or Asia. Where women are employed they remain in positions of lower status and/or in those which are of an administrative nature. Few work at a management level or in the field. It remains the case that conservation is still dominated by men: it is seen predominantly as men's work. Few women have the necessary high level of dedication or know how to overcome such bias and discrimination. Even where efforts have been made to recruit

women professionals they have had little success because women feel marginalised and uncomfortable working in such a male-dominated environment.

3.6 PROJECT ANALYSIS, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There is a lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation within, and of, ICDPs, particularly during project implementation. As an ICDP evaluation describes:

> *"Little hard data is available to measure the socio-economic and conservation impact of ICDPs. Project managers often postpone monitoring and evaluation because they believe it is too donor driven, too complex and too time consuming, and rely instead on anecdotal information and intuition"* (WWF, 1995: v).

When surveys are carried out in local communities the collection of gender-desegregated data is now reasonably common. However, they tend to rely on the collection of quantitative data rather than qualitative. This is a reflection of the continued dependence on quantitative indicators for measuring project success.

Qualitative data is certainly more difficult to obtain and measure, however it is vital in providing a better understanding of the inequities present in communities, and during project assessments - the more subtle benefits and/or costs that may arise from any interventions. Women, for example, may not see economic benefits as the only or primary benefit that they obtain from a project - there may be more important ones such as feelings of pride, wellbeing, contribution, self-esteem or control of one's own life and future. There is little indication that these are factors that are measured and/or explored in current monitoring and evaluation programmes. As such, the establishment of suitable indicators and monitoring mechanisms that can measure the impacts of ICDPs on gender equity – from a qualitative perspective as well as quantitative – is required.

In addition, inadequate effort is made to provide comfortable spaces for women to contribute to data collection. During surveys information is often collected in the presence of men, so women may be wary of speaking out. They lack confidence to express their views and may risk reprisals if they do not agree with their husbands. Women are often short of time, particularly during the day when it is more common for projects to carry out monitoring and evaluation work. Evaluation teams are usually headed by men, and though the importance of having at least one woman member of teams is recognised, it is often difficult to find one who is available, skilled and, for example, can speak local languages.

Thorough, adequate gender analyses are rare. Few have been carried out during project planning, implementation or evaluation. Those few identified through this research have been listed in the Recommended Texts at the end of this document. In general, these tend to be one-off and conducted by external gender consultants, who have no further linkages with the project or the local communities.

Though these assessments can certainly be useful in indicating gaps within project activities and processes, and exposing staff and stakeholders to gender issues, they do little to contribute to a long-term understanding of gender and change within the local communities. Indeed, rarely does monitoring and evaluation track longer-term impacts. Changes in gender perspectives, roles, responsibilities etc. can only be truly measured in the long-term, especially if attempting to measure the impacts of supported initiatives on biodiversity conservation.

Clear indicators need to be developed (preferably through a process of local community design) that can be used for measuring change. Though proxy indicators (such as number of women directly involved in project activities) can be valuable when assessing impacts, qualitative and more deeply embedded indicators are also necessary for assessing less visible change, for instance in attitudes and personal development. Such systems will, of course, have to be affordable, and collection of data feasible.

On an optimistic note, gender is increasingly being seen as a necessary variable in more integrated and holistic approaches to conservation, such as in ecoregional planning. Indeed, McDonald (2002:16) suggests:

> *"gender as a variable within broader ecoregion analysis (stakeholder analysis, socioeconomic assessment, root cause analysis) is likely to be more effective than standalone gender research in identifying the ways gender dynamics are (or are not) relevant to conservation and suggesting entry points for interventions."*

Where project analyses have taken a more participatory approach, they do appear to have been reasonably successful in including, and taking account of, women's views, perspectives and knowledge. Opinions differ as to whether data should be collected in mixed male and female groups, or in segregated groups. Both have their advantages and disadvantages. One must conclude that it will depend on the local context and circumstances.

However, though some ICDPs state that they use participatory approaches for data collection and analysis, these usually extend little further than activities such as community mapping. A number of projects suggest that they use PRA (participatory rural appraisal) when clearly they do not. Though participatory research techniques may be used, the process does not support the true elements of PRA such as long-term empowerment, community control or 'ownership' and the initiation of a process of reflection and change.

Indeed many current development efforts are based on the perceptions of outsiders who have a relatively poor understanding of issues at the local level. To enhance the possibility of success in implementing different conservation and development options, it is very important that trust is established between project interventions and the community. Assessments should be based on community input since they are in the best position to identify their needs. In addition this would encourage communities to feel that they have 'ownership' over any changes that occur.

But, in practice, if data is collected for monitoring and evaluation purposes, rarely is the information properly analysed and time allowed for good reflection and stakeholder input. Even if this is achieved then the quite formal and rigid structures of ICDPs allow little room for flexibility, adaptation and response to the data. From a gender perspective, as a result, even less time and space is given to the exploration of inequities and their impacts.

3.6.1 Community Monitoring

A small minority of ICDPs have begun to explore and support community monitoring, for example of natural resources. A particularly successful example of a CBNRM project that has initiated a women's monitoring system is the Community Resource Monitors (CRM) project in Namibia (described in detail in the Africa regional study). This project focuses on women's monitoring and control of resources that are used by themselves and other community members. Similarly, in Asia there are several examples of women being involved in participatory forest inventories.

By undertaking monitoring work, women can gain knowledge about, and a higher level of control over, resources associated with ICDPs while at the same time ensuring that environmental practices are followed. They can also introduce more sustainable management techniques and enhance the economic returns by encouraging less wastage or loss. It can be a valuable way of promoting linkages between conservation and development processes, as well as rights over and responsibilities for, natural resources and their management.

4. MAKING ICDPS WORK FOR WOMEN AS WELL AS MEN

Lessons learnt from ICDPs (as well as some examples from CBNRM projects) have been described above. However, how can these lessons learnt be taken forward to achieve more successful links between conservation and a more *equitable* development of local communities? This concluding chapter attempts to answer this question, synthesise the main issues to take into account and suggest ways forward.

4.1 LINKING CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

As described above (Section 1.5) establishing the linkages between conservation and development is vital for the long-term sustainability of ICDPs and their objectives. This is difficult, however, and few ICDPs are managing to achieve it. It is particularly difficult when trying to link the more development-focussed components of ICDPs with conservation. In attempting to benefit women and their perceived needs (seen in the past as mainly practical rather than strategic), ICDPs have introduced a range of women's projects - mainly development-focussed. These have had few direct linkages with natural resource use and as such women have rarely understood the conservation-development concept that is the central crux of ICDPs.

Therefore one can question the value of ICDPs and whether such conservation-development linkages are actually possible. Indeed, a lack of faith in ICDPs has been expressed increasingly in recent years, reflected in reduced donor funding, particularly from development-oriented sources. As a recent DFID report on wildlife and poverty linkages states (Livestock and Wildlife Advisory Group, 2002: vi), there has been:

> *"growing internal and external questioning of the extent of conservation-development win-wins; concerns about the negative impact of conservation on poor people; [and] the high transaction costs of community-based projects, particularly in remote and marginal areas."*

DFID now funds only two bilateral wildlife projects and a handful of wildlife-linked forestry projects.

Unfortunately however, there are few, if any, alternatives to the ICDP concept, particularly in and around protected areas and particularly where there is a vacuum of enabling legislation or institutional structures to support the wider scope of CBNRM. As such, the conservation of wildlife, forests, landscapes etc *must* be linked to local communities and provide them with sufficient benefits to justify their continued protection. Conservation of resources will not occur without the support of local communities. And, as the DFID report concludes:

> *"community-based and co-management approaches to wildlife management can successfully help reduce poverty and improve livelihoods"* (*ibid*: 23).

Thus the ICDP concept must be made to work.

4.2 WAYS FORWARD

As described in more detail in the two regional studies (Africa and Asia) there have been some, albeit so far few, examples where a greater level of success has been obtained in achieving the goals of ICDPs, including contributing to more *equitable* development.

Lessons from these can provide some indication of ways forward. Components of these have been discussed above. Here, the key elements and issues will be summarised.

4.2.1 A Long Time Frame is Essential

Establishing linkages between conservation and development takes time. Such concepts are likely to prove alien, particularly to those who prioritise on a day-to-day basis. Many women are forced to do this being under immense pressure to provide for households' daily needs. Thus they have little time to think about, let alone contribute to, longer-term processes such as the conservation of resources. This is particularly true in contexts where communities are vulnerable to insecurities (including those related to food, conflict, environment and land/resources).

Therefore, time is needed to convince communities that investment in conservation practices and processes will pay off in the long term. This involves changing attitudes, and cannot be hurried. Once attitudes have changed, time is needed for these to influence and be reflected in action. Confidence and trust must be built up and a favourable and comfortable context for people to initiate change established. Where cultures and societies are not yet ready to experience such change, especially change pushed from the 'outside', interventions can be constantly blocked and are unlikely to be sustainable.

ICDPs and their components are highly complex. Myriad issues are encompassed and must be addressed. Attempting to incorporate gender issues and more equitable development only adds to the complexity. Adequate time is needed to do this, otherwise ICDPs will never be given the chance to succeed and their potential will remain undelivered. In the long-term it seems likely that more positive success will be achieved if support and investment is maintained. This needs to involve a broader policy-linked and community-wide programme of support.

4.2.2 Women's Access to Resources and Decision-Making Processes Need to be Secured

Increasing women's securities, whether through access to land, resources or involvement in decision-making processes, provides a better environment for encouraging involvement and investment in conservation. Again, achieving this is likely to take time and a high level of inputs, including a sound knowledge of local gender inequities and reasons for them, together with an identification of constraints to women's securities and ways to overcome them.

Pressures, particularly from donors, are placed on ICDPs to achieve short-term results. However if gender inequities are to be addressed there must be some acknowledgement and, if possible, some incorporation of 'larger' and more long-term issues such as land and resource rights. In agrarian societies, tribal or non-tribal, land is the critical resource that determines both socio-economic position and political power. Women's exclusion from land rights is typical in Africa and South Asia, where land is usually inherited through the male line. Women's legal rights are rendered ineffective both by traditional customs and government programmes. Therefore if long-term sustainability of ICDPs, including the achievement of a greater degree of gender equity, is the goal then such issues must be addressed.

Conflicts may arise as women or other marginalised groups begin to enforce their resource rights. This conflict should be anticipated and time and resources committed to help communities resolve the issue. It is important to recognise that there may be some resistance

from men to women being involved in conservation and development processes and initiatives. Ways to overcome this, such as public discussions, must be identified and implemented. Mediators may be necessary.

Conflicts can also exist between traditional and modern institutions and structures. In most countries in Africa and Asia there is legislation and institutional backing for more equitable gender representation and participation. However, such provision often conflicts with the still predominantly male-dominated traditional institutions that exist, particularly at the community level. Change cannot be forced, however it is possible to support more equitable decision-making processes by encouraging a recognition, acknowledgement and incorporation of elements of the modern within the traditional. Traditional institutions are not static and over time have developed and adapted to different pressures, including, for a large period of their development, to male-dominated colonial powers.

There is evidence to suggest that if women continue to be marginalised and have little control over their lives then they will be encouraged to withdraw and separate themselves from conservation and development processes. In Zambia, due to an ICDP there failing to include women, the sense that joint responsibility and cooperation over resource use could result in mutual long-term benefit has been lost, and a culture of dependency, apathy and helplessness has been cultivated. Many women now believe that initiative and ability to improve their quality of life comes only from others: men, extension workers, NGOs and/or donors.

4.2.3 An Holistic, Integrated, Strategic, Participatory and Well Thought-Out Approach is Needed

It has been indicated that women will be more supportive of projects once they see that their own short-term needs are being met. As such, it may be necessary to begin by focussing on these, but with longer-term aspects in mind. In well thought-out and integrated projects, both can be tackled simultaneously.

Some of the most successful components of ICDPs, for both women and conservation, are those that achieve a number of benefits concurrently. For example, the support of education has proved an empowering feature for women as well as providing a forum for promoting a conservation message and encouraging a better flow of information. In addition the support of gas stoves in trekking areas of Nepal means that time is saved from cooking; women's (and families') health is improved; a small business is established including employment for those distributing the gas; there is potential for gas to be produced from local waste; and the use of wood for fuel is reduced.

However as stressed in Section 3.4.5, to encourage the use of alternatives to natural resource use, such as through biogas stoves, the benefits of doing so must exceed the benefits of continuing resource use and/or the costs of transferring.

It is vital to think holistically and in an integrated way as to how gender issues and support for women can be incorporated into ICDPs. However, time and again, women's issues appear as an 'add-on' feature with little linkages to the central objectives of the projects and overall goals. As such they will continue to fail to achieve sustainability or utilise women's highly valuable potential contribution to ICDP success.

The advantages and disadvantages of 'women's projects' and a gender approach should be debated. In most contexts some combination of the two is most productive. How this is achieved should form the basis for a gender strategy and work plan. Gender mainstreaming

cannot be worked out by adding feminine endings to documents, or mentioning that everything will be done based on 'a gender perspective'. In practice, gender equity mainstreaming implies revision and redesign of all the relevant aspects of an ICDP. This revision can be started at any stage, but it is most successful when it is incorporated from the very outset.

Projects also need to link more effectively with the greater context in which they work, taking into account larger social, economic and political issues. Projects that take a more holistic and integrated approach to conservation and development tend to be those that are more successful in including and benefiting a greater proportion of the community. Projects need to be flexible and able to adapt to change as it occurs.

It is important to have a vision of what the project is ultimately to achieve. This should be realistic and achievable given local contexts and circumstances (including gender issues). The pathway to this vision should include a viable and well-planned exit strategy. This should focus on sustaining activities and maintaining (and indeed expanding) the links between conservation and development.

4.2.4 A Focus on the Use of All Resources, Not Just Wildlife, is Vital

In Africa in particular there is still an emphasis within ICDPs, particularly in areas of big game, to focus on community wildlife management. Because of cultural, social and physical constraints women are less likely to be able to participate in such management. Thus an emphasis on other resources, such as plants and smaller wildlife, needs to be included. This will not only provide room for the greater participation of women, but also benefit conservation by taking a more holistic and integrated approach that can only prove more sustainable in the long run.

In Namibia a strong linkage has been promoted between conservation and rural development. Admittedly, this would not have been possible without the recently introduced supporting legislation which allows communities and private landowners authority and 'control' over land and resources, defined within a 'conservancy' area. This has provided a good foundation for building CBNRM-linked projects including the relatively successful women-led CRM (Community Resource Monitors) scheme. This innovative scheme has linked sustainable use of resources for income-generation projects (such as the sale of thatch grass for tourist lodges and palms and natural dyes for handicrafts) with community monitoring of the resources and environmental education and training programmes. Rights to resources have been linked to responsibilities for their management and conservation.

4.2.5 'Gender' Must Be Demystified, De-threatened and Mainstreamed

The differences between men and women have been a central focus of this research project. However it should be stressed that firstly, there are also many commonalties and secondly, differences due to gender should not be seen as a cause of separation of men's and women's worlds. These worlds are highly connected, often complementary and sometimes less strictly divided than might be first perceived.

For example, an important step towards the process involving equity building between genders is to demythologise the common belief that men possess the 'scientific' knowledge, whereas women possess the 'practical' knowledge. Both genders possess both types of knowledge, but perhaps from different perspectives. Both should be valued equally.

The need for the inclusion of gender issues should be something that has been realised by all involved in ICDP planning and implementation. It should not be included merely to appease donors and/or certain individuals. Otherwise it is more likely to be something that people have little interest in becoming involved in, or even a threat.

A process may be needed to reach such agreement, including achieving a common understanding of what gender means and why it should be included. Training and space for an exploration of the issues may be required. This should link gender directly with the ICDP and natural resource management. There should be room for continual feedback, reflection and adaptation throughout the life of the project. If an 'outside expert' is required to facilitate such a process she/he should be aware of local specifics and be in a position to continue to work with the project throughout its development. Gender training and input should not be a one-off activity.

Sensitivity is needed when addressing gender issues, as well as respect for local culture and religion. However, this should not be used as an excuse to indulge in cultural stereotypes or generalisations. As such, it is important to recognise that every local situation is different and project staff must try to remain objective and rational in relation to this area of work.

In addition it should be recognised that societies and culture are not static but continuously changing and adapting to both external and internal pressures and influences. Indeed, the cultures that have vitality in these modern times are those that are able to change and adapt to the circumstances of the time. The relationships between men/women and natural resources and/or conservation are also dynamic, as culture, communities, environments and local/national political economies change. Livelihoods are becoming more complex and opportunities are arising for women to become more involved in 'productive' economic processes. How beneficial such changes really are to women are not yet fully understood. However, where such changes and resulting 'windows of opportunities' for women can prove beneficial they should be recognised and utilised. A flexible and adaptable approach is vital.

Gender relations are about power as well as difference; and conflict as well as cooperation. However they should not be viewed in a negative light, but be seen more as means to initiate a process of transforming negative aspects of society (and its relationship with the environment) to positive and enabling ones.

Conservation organisations in particular need to move forward in mainstreaming gender throughout their institutions. This must begin by making firm and concise commitments to gender issues within policies and strategies. A programme of focussed gender awareness and planning must be put into place with adequate resources, back-up support and technical stop-gapping available.

More positive encouragement should be given for women to take up positions within organisations at senior managerial and field levels. Recruitment and selection processes should be assessed in view of gender concerns. Organisations should play a clearer advocacy role in promoting gender equity, particularly in relation to environmental processes. This can be achieved by producing materials for the media; participating in discussions and workshops; developing alliances and partnerships on gender; and ensuring that all documentation has a gender sensitive approach and language.

The responsibility for mainstreaming gender issues and ensuring representation and participation of women throughout organisations' policies and projects must be clearly

defined. How best such responsibility should be divided may be a matter of debate, but eventually a decision should be made as to how it can be established and taken forward.

Organisations must be clear about what donors require and expect in relation to gender issues. In addition they need to understand how these requirements might affect projects; what constraints are likely to arise; and how best to take such demands forward into practice. They should act as a link between donors (and their demands) and project/field staff (and their results or problems) and provide clear, concise, adequate and timely information for both parties.

4.2.6 Partnerships and Collaborations Should Be Established

Partnerships and collaborations with local organisations (including NGOs; government organisations; research institutes; development agencies and CBOs) can have a positive facilitating role in addressing gender issues and at the same time greatly improve sustainability. Strong partners can focus on issues that may be beyond the remit or strengths of conservation organisations. Local organisations are often more aware of and capable of coping with local issues such as those specific to a given culture. They can also provide new entry points for interventions.

The capacity-building of partners or potential partners should be a priority area of ICDPs to increase awareness and support action. Policy implementation depends on sufficient institutional capacity. If enabling and supportive policy exists, but lacks the institutional structures to facilitate its implementation, then it proves useless. Building linkages amongst and between actors and groups at different scales through coalitions, alliance building and networking can strengthen equitable and effective resource management. Such linkages and partnerships constitute a bridge between external opportunities and local initiatives.

Outsiders can often play an important role in identifying problems and constraints; providing a strong role model to villagers and staff; and facilitating partnerships and networking. Foreigners, for example, are often more able to move freely with little criticism. However, one can argue that local facilitators can play an equally, if not more productive role, especially if they are trusted and respected members of the local community.

ICDPs could put a much greater effort into linking with local groups as well as working with those who have more experience in addressing gender issues and encouraging a better participation of women. Such linking would have the advantage of making a better use of scarce resources; drawing on experience, knowledge and skills of a more diverse group; encouraging the acceptance of the conservation/development organisation at the local level (i.e. overcoming suspicion, even contestation); ensuring better accountability and transparency; and in all likelihood meaning a better chance of success for the projects.

4.3 CONCLUSION

ICDPs do offer potential for integrating the conservation of natural resources and the development of local communities. However, the achievement of positive results has been slow. Though there are some examples of projects and elements of projects that have made some progress in alleviating poverty through development such as income-generation projects, these are rarely linked to conservation processes and the protection of the environment. In addition there is, as yet, little evidence to suggest that ICDPs have contributed to more *equitable* long-term development in local communities. Indeed within

ICDPs in general, gender is still seen as an issue that is too political, too sensitive and too time- and resource-consuming for inclusion.

If ICDPs are to be truly community-based then the gender inequities inherent in communities and institutions must be understood, recognised and addressed. Though this may involve tackling sensitive issues such as 'power relations', it may be the only way forward to move beyond the lip-service paid to addressing women's needs, rights and responsibilities that has been seen so far.

In addition, there is a continued failure (excluding rare examples) of local communities (both women and men) making the necessary link between their development and the conservation of natural resources, as well as rights to, and responsibilities over, such resources. This undermines the whole premise on which ICDPs have been built and therefore questions the entire ICDP approach. Unless more effort and resources are put into building up this link then ICDPs will not be sustainable.

At the same time ICDPs must not work in a vacuum but understand the relationships and linkages between the projects and 'external' factors including social, political, cultural and economic pressures and/or change. Adaptability, flexibility and a long-term focus are vital. Issues such as gender equity cannot be addressed over night but require commitment, time, resources and sensitive, well-informed interventions.

APPENDIX 1 - FUTURE RESEARCH

Priority areas identified for future research are:

- To achieve a better understanding of the links between conservation initiatives and population trends including migration (both in and out of local areas). This includes issues of community health, population control and education as well as factors influenced by government (local, regional and national) strategies and policy.
- To analyse longer-term changes in the relationships between local communities (both men and women) and the environment as a result of ICDP intervention.
- To establish what are the most successful processes for establishing linkages between the conservation of resources and the development of local communities. What really works?
- To assess the changes in men and women's perceptions as livelihoods are in transition and education and market forces are affecting people's aspirations.
- To assess the impact on women and men of changing livelihood practices and opportunities to increasingly take part in more economic productive process.
- To understand how gendered resource use and/or shifting land-use patterns interact with environmental change at the local level, particularly in times of environmental (and other) stress.
- To identify and assess women's role in conflict resolution, particularly in relation to use of natural resources and including negotiation and mediation processes.
- To establish how women in different social contexts mobilise themselves and others to access resources, influence decisions and resolve conflicts.
- To achieve a better understanding of the dynamics of current institutional changes and how they impact on communities and their relationships with the environment.
- To establish qualitative (as well as quantitative) indicators that adequately account for the impacts and potential impacts of ICDPs.
- To establish research and action programmes that continue to clarify concepts, refine methodologies, and find practical ways of overcoming inequities of gender in biodiversity management and conservation.

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RECOMMENDED TEXTS

GENERAL TEXTS ON ICDPS AND CBNRM INCLUDING GENDER

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