

IGETI, improve gender equality in territorial issues

Natural resources are shrinking. However, land remains a primary source of livelihoods in rural settings. Improving both men and women's access to land not only contributes to sustainable livelihoods but also enhances socio-economic growth. The Improving Gender Equality in Territorial Issues (IGETI) approach aims at promoting gender equality in access and management of land and other natural resources.

New and more accessible data, satellite imagery and direct field observations, have increased the capacity of UN to provide a more detailed picture of natural resources availability and quality.

In 2011 FAO published the State of the World's Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture¹ that showed how natural resources are shrinking and confirmed the little efforts made by public and private stakeholders to tackle the situation of degraded natural resources. This scenario is likely to continue, particularly when considering the increasing demographic dynamics, since the world population is expected to grow to 9.3 billion by 2050².

Moreover, there are still many gender inequalities worldwide in terms of access to land and other natural resources, due to local traditions and socio-cultural factors that cause social inequalities.

As stated in the 2010-2011 State of Food and Agriculture dedicated to Women in Agriculture³, the agricultural sector is underperforming in many developing countries, also because women do not have equal access to productive resources, services and opportunities.

In many cultures, women's access to land and natural resources is limited because they are not even considered as agricultural producers or because of inheritance and customary laws, and community norms. Often, rural women have no access to land markets and don't participate in decision-making processes at community level and within rural organizations.

In this context, the need to improve approaches and methodologies related to natural resources planning and management is a given. Two major dimensions must assume a central role in this new conception: natural resources and people.

In recent years there has been a growing appreciation of holistic approaches. However, efforts to move towards integrated methods still remain confined in the field of "technical" skills driven by "experts". The missing dimension is quite often the one related to "people" and their needs, interests, rights and cultures. Attempts to introduce "participatory" approaches remain inadequate and a decreasing capacity of public institutions dealing with natural resources goes hand in hand with the increasing request by a variety of stakeholders to be actively involved in the process.

The result is a fragmentation of decision-making processes. This opens new windows of opportunity for marginalized groups, especially women, in order for them to actively influence programmes and participate in policy-making.

The territory as an "entry point" for promoting gender equality

"Improving Gender Equality in Territorial Issues (IGETI)⁴" represents a new methodological approach where the territory is considered as an "entry point" to promote gender equality in land access and territorial development. It allows an improved understanding of different values, visions and interests of men and women related to access, use and management of land and other resources.



Women workers in the tea plantations in Kericho, Kenya

The IGETI guidelines propose a series of interventions to reduce the gender gap in land rights, without necessarily involving land redistribution. The main objective is to help people become more aware of power asymmetries and improve participation in decision-making to promote gender-responsive territorial development. The idea is to promote negotiation tables where different stakeholders, with adequate representation of rural men and women, can sit together and agree on the development of their territory in terms of available resources and services.

Training sessions on the IGETI approach have already been conducted in Angola, Kenya and Somaliland to provide participants with principles and tools for territorial negotiation, using participatory and gender approaches.

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The IGETI Approach:

1. Gender-sensitive Territorial Diagnosis (Stakeholders, management/ access/ use of natural resources)
2. Dialogue among the stakeholders on the development of their territory and gender-responsive proposals
3. Negotiation process and consensus building (Establishment of participatory local partnerships)
4. External monitoring and evaluation (Territorial Facilitation Team)

Territory & territorial

The terms "territory" and "territorial" are used to indicate a space where individuals, groups and communities live and organise themselves, and where multiple stakeholders claim different types of rights (legal, economic, environmental, social and cultural). The territory has therefore to be seen as the physical environment where women and men have access to and use natural resources, but also as an arena for dialogue and negotiations.

- 1 SOLAW, <http://www.fao.org/nt/solaw/solaw-home/en/>
- 2 United Nations Population Division .2012. World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision.
- 3 FAO. 2011. The State of food and agriculture. Women in agriculture. Closing the gender gap for development <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf>
- 4 FAO. 2012. Improving Gender Equality in Territorial Issues <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/me282e/me282e.pdf>