

# Women's Leadership in Forest Recovery in Nepal

A Round Table discussion on "Agriculture, Environment and Forestry: Role of Women's Leadership" was held in Ahmedabad on July 10, 2017 with women leaders from Nepal who have been working on key issues of sustainability and conservation in Nepal ever since a devastating 2015 earthquake had hit their country.

The role of small business in forest produce trade; the scope for green bonds to invest in forestry; and linking forestry recovery with national development planning came up in the discussions.

The leaders discussed ways to feminize forestry activities in favour of work, income, and ecosystem away from profits, timber trading, and singular business interests.

The leaders agreed that there was a need to rethink the very foundations of modern forestry with historically grounded, highly current, and well



Photo: AIDMI.

argued lessons from ongoing recovery in Nepal. The earthquake recovery may deepen the inequality between those who benefit from forests and those who do not. For the people dependent on forests for their livelihood, the aftermath of the earthquake mattered more than the actual earthquake.

In addition needs capability building were discussed, which included ways of understanding multi-sectoral forestry needs of women; disaster vulnerability of forests; integrating women's livelihoods and protection programming for forestry recovery; and understanding new stakeholders in forestry recovery.



The participants pin pointed four areas for more work in building resilience of forests to disasters: formal and informal institutions; forest households; forest produce markets; and forest related policies such as water harvesting, and carbon sink.

It was concluded that more investment was needed in building capabilities of local leaders to find local ways to plan for DRR compliant forestry in the districts. A pedagogy of risk reduction is needed for the forests of the past, present, and the future. ■

- Mihir R. Bhatt