

Linkages Between Environment Degradation, Poverty, Gender and other Equity

Environmental Degradation

- **Resource availability to the poor severely eroded due to 2 parallel and interrelated trends:**

 - ***Primary factors***
 - **Growing degradation both in quantity and quality**
 - **Increasing statization and privatization along with decline of CPRs**

 - ***Intermediary factors***
 - **Erosion of community-based resource mgnt system**
 - **Population growth**
 - **Technological choice in agriculture**
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Differential Impact on women of poor HHs

- Gender based division of labour**
 - Gender differences in distribution of resources**
 - Gender inequalities in access to most productive resources**
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Class-gender Effects

time

income

nutrition

health

social-survival networks

indigenous knowledge

Grassroots movements

- Agency role of women – protests, movements and continuing struggle
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Poverty and Environmental Resource Degradation (P-ERD)

- ❑ **Mainstream view that poverty is the prime mover of environmental degradation**
 - ❑ over-extraction of resources by the poor
 - ❑ poor are ignorant of both the limitations of their environmental resources and consequences of their extractive usage practices
 - ❑ poor have little stake in the health and productivity of their natural resources
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Fragile Resource Zones (FRZ)

- ❑ **Dry tropical plains and mountainous areas**
 - ❑ **fragility**
 - ❑ **marginality**
 - ❑ **low accessibility**
 - ❑ **Limited resources, high risk, low-productivity options**
 - ❑ **Poverty of the people and fragility of natural resources – operation of PERD links**
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Foundations of the traditional systems of natural resource management in the FRZ

- Sustenance driven or integrated stake in the health and productivity of natural resource base (NRB)**
 - Physical proximity facilitates evolving local/community based institutional measures to prevent over-exploitation**
 - Adherence to social sanctions to protect and enhance community stake in its resources**
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Changes imposed

Erosion of above arrangements with introduction of externally induced changes

- **Administrative & Market integration,**
- **dominant mainstream systems, legal and administrative and fiscal measures,**
- **emphasis on supply side issues, uncontrolled demands on resources,**
- **strong tendency for centralization for NRM etc.**

Backlash

- ❑ ~~Erosion of trad. arrangements which helped in the regulated use of NRB due to external interventions~~
 - ❑ Depriving local communities of their role and responsibilities – outward looking
 - ❑ Replacing local institutions by legal and administration evolved at a higher level
 - ❑ Distortion of community incentive systems with patronage, subsidies and relief etc.
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Consequences

- Disintegration of community stakes in the natural resources**
 - Disempowerment of the communities to manage their problems including natural resource protection**
 - Marginalisation of local knowledge systems and institutional arrangements which helped in NRB protection**
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What is possible?

- ❑ Reviving community stake in the NRB
 - ❑ Local control over local natural resources
 - ❑ Use of local perspective and traditional knowledge systems
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