



We can - a campaign of women foresters in Mongolia

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Extended summary

The role of women in Mongolia's forestry and environmental sector is undergoing a significant transformation, marked by both challenges and emerging opportunities. Currently, the gender ratio at the basic and medium levels is nearly balanced at 1:1; however, at upper-level decision-making positions, the disparity is stark, with a ratio of 1:9 in favour of men. Until 2023, there had been no active campaigns focused on women's involvement in forestry. This changed with the launch of a campaign for women foresters on November 2, 2023, supported by the Embassy of Slovenia in Beijing and the Slovenian Forest Institute. The initiative aims to enhance skills, foster collaboration, and build partnerships among women in forestry.

The campaign “Changing the image of forestry” has initiated the networking activities amongst women foresters in Mongolia, and has organized several capacity building trainings in the rural areas, and the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. Over 370 participants attended training sessions across various aimags, with an overwhelming majority (98%) being women actively employed in the sector. The age distribution of participants indicates that 50% are aged 31-45 years, 31% are aged 46-60 years, 9% are over 60 years, and 11% are aged 21-30 years. Employment data reveals that 43% work in governmental organizations, 25% hold executive positions in companies, while 11% are employed in private entities and 8% are affiliated with NGOs.

Survey results from the training seminars indicate that 78% of respondents have worked in the forest sector for up to 15 years. Income levels among participants show that 46% earn between 1-2 million MNT (3380 MNT= 1 USD) monthly, while 40% earn less than 1 million MNT. Only a small fraction (4%) earn more than 3 million MNT. Key challenges identified include low engagement and income (32%), insufficient partnerships and collaboration (22%), deficient knowledge transfer regarding technology and innovation (10%), weak capacity building (10%), and a lack of training opportunities to enhance capabilities.

Despite these challenges, there is a strong aspiration among women in the forestry sector to formulate gender policies; approximately 83% expressed interest in developing such initiatives. The “Forest, Sustainability, Women's association has conducted eight active training seminars over the past ten months, emphasizing knowledge sharing and partnership development at local, regional, and international levels.

In conclusion, while progress has been made in recognizing the importance of women's roles in Mongolia's forestry sector, significant gaps remain. Initiatives aimed at enhancing women's participation and influence are crucial for sustainable forest management. Continued focus on gender equity will be essential for addressing existing challenges and ensuring the future sustainability of forests in Mongolia.

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