The ‘agro-tourism’ activity would open up our village to outsiders, with whom we will be able to share our biodiversity while earning some income and conserving our forests. Conservation of the forest is important for our future generations.

Research activities demonstrated the need to mobilize the younger generation in conservation activities, especially young men who had visibly different aspirations for the forest than other village members.

Considering the influential position of the men in the village, involving older men who are active in the village council, fostering dialogue among the generations and genders, and educating young men and women, who are the future custodians of the forest, will be essential for ensuring the conservation of their precious forest resources.

During the research activities, we were divided into four groups: older men, older women, younger men and older men. I was in the older women’s group. Each group participated in many research activities and discussions and then presented its work to all the participants.

It was during this presentation that we (women) realized why we did not have enough mangoes for our pickling activities. While there are a lot of mangoes produced during the fruiting season, men were collecting and selling them straight from the orchards without our knowing!

Now that we are aware of what is happening, my friends and I have negotiated with the men the purchase of the young mangoes they collect and we are able to produce more pickle products.

Since then, men have also become more supportive of our wish to be more economically active.

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Research carried out within this project gave us the opportunity to voice our concerns and aspirations separately as older women, younger women, older men and younger men.

We want our village to prosper, we will earn more and our village will make its way on the international map.

During the marketing exercise, I expressed that we face a problem finding places to sell our pickled mangoes. We had never gone outside our village to sell anything before. The research team guided us in a Rapid Market Appraisal exercise, where we met prospective buyers outside of our village and negotiated potential product sales with them. It was an amazing experience!

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Research carried out within this project gave us the opportunity to voice our concerns and aspirations separately as older women, younger women, older men and younger men.

We hope that from this agro-tourism project, our village will prosper, we will earn more and our village will make its way on the international map.