

Women at the Frontline of Sustainable Mountain Development

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

22 June 2012, 11:00–13:00
Mountain Pavilion
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Two decades after the first, ground-breaking Rio Summit, many mountain women continue to be economically poor and disadvantaged in terms of access to natural and development resources and power relations. Although some mountain countries have made gains in women's economic power, many have made less progress in the implementation of policies, allocation of resources, and political will needed to make a difference to marginalized rural women. Women's economic and social empowerment is rarely a central goal in the renewed attention to sustainable development and the emerging global debate on green economy and climate change. Yet women have valuable knowledge and experience in adapting to multiple drivers of change including climate change, globalization, economic policies, out-migration, and land use change in mountain contexts. People in the mountains, particularly women, experience these changes differently and disproportionately because of socially constructed gender relations and the environmental fragility of mountain contexts.

This event provides an opportunity to share the voices and experiences of normally excluded but critically important actors of sustainable mountain development, and offers a global platform for dialogue and discussion among policy and decision makers, researchers, women leaders, and gender advocates. The event is expected to have both cross-regional impact and global significance. It is part of ICIMOD's commitment to improve the livelihoods and wellbeing of mountain women, men, and children in the greater Himalayan region, and is a lead-up to the international Bhutan+10 conference on gender and sustainable mountain development to be held in October 2012 (see overleaf).



Objectives

- To recognize the critical roles, knowledge, agency, and experience of women in sustainable mountain development
- To focus on equitable and inclusive ways of integrating gender analysis, methodologies, and best practices for sustainable mountain development
- To share new knowledge and practices on gender and natural resource management
- To discuss challenges, resistance, and continued gender inequities
- To set new agendas for gender-positive change and gender-responsive research, policies, and institutions in the context of rapid change

Expected Outcomes

- Up-to-date knowledge on the status of gender-specific issues and approaches in sustainable mountain development
- Initiation of discussions among key global gender networks and experts leading up to the Bhutan+10 conference
- Awareness of policy makers and Rio+20 delegates on gender dimensions of sustainable mountain development

Speakers

- Lyonpo Dr Pema Gyamtsho, Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Bhutan
- Sabine Güertner, GIZ
- Pasang Dolma Sherpa, Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN)
- Nathalie Eddy, Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA)
- Dr Arzu Rana Deuba, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Dr David Molden, Director General, ICIMOD
- Dr Ritu Verma, ICIMOD

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Upcoming in October

Bhutan+10

Gender and Sustainable Mountain Development in a Changing World



ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

Conference Vision

In 2002, ICIMOD organized the international conference 'Celebrating Mountain Women', as the only global event during the International Year of Mountains to focus on mountain women in the context of sustainable mountain development. It brought together 250 participants from 35 countries around the world.

A decade later, globalization, climate change and other drivers of change are creating new challenges and dilemmas, as well as opportunities, for mountain women and men. In light of these changes, emerging concerns, and persistent challenges, ICIMOD, Bhutan's Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, and the National Commission for Women and Children, Bhutan are organizing an international conference, Bhutan+10, which will bring together mountain women and men, researchers, policy makers, and development practitioners from the HKH region and around the world in a post-Rio+20 world for a comprehensive update, stock-taking, and new agenda setting.

The gathering is expected to have both regional impact and international significance. By providing opportunities to share the voices and experiences of normally excluded but critically important sectors of society, it can ultimately lead to policy change in national, regional, and global spheres, at an opportune time after global environmental challenges and opportunities have been debated at Rio+20.

Conference Themes

The conference will include plenary sessions, panels, and discussions on the following six themes:

- I **Climate Change:** Gender and Adaptation
- II **Livelihoods:** Inclusive Sustainable Development
- III **Governance:** Gender-Responsive Policies and Plural Institutions
- IV **Gender-Positive Change:** Successes, Challenges, and Agenda-Setting for Gender 'Mainstreaming'
- V **Ecosystems:** Benefit Sharing, Access, and Equity in Diverse Environments and Common Property Regimes
- VI **Water:** Equitable Access, Control, and Benefits of Water Resources

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See the call for papers at
www.icimod.org/bhutan+10

International Conference

Thimphu, Bhutan 15–19 October 2012



Gender Issues in Mountain Contexts

Despite successive yet often under-resourced gender 'mainstreaming' efforts over time, mountain women and men have not always had equitable access to development resources and opportunities in an increasingly globalised world. Women and men experience changes differently. In particular, women in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas experience changes acutely and disproportionately, in particular because upland and mountain contexts are highly fragile, inaccessible, vulnerable to hazards, and differentiated by gender, class, caste, ethnicity, and other domains of difference. Often, women are most affected by multiple drivers of change owing to socially constructed norms and practices such as limited ownership and access to resources, multiple roles and responsibilities, skewed gender divisions of labour, and exclusion from decision and policy making processes.

At the same time, women often have critical knowledge and experience in adapting to climate change and managing natural resources in the context of high rates of male outmigration, land use change, and other drivers of change. They sustainably manage, generate, conserve, and use natural resources such as water, land, forests, pastures, and biodiversity within and across diverse environments. They are also the backbone of mountain agriculture, livelihoods, and natural resource management.

