

Project partners

The project works with lead partners in each country, supplemented by over 70 associate partners, based on their capabilities and reach. Other interested organisations are welcome to join this advocacy project.

Lead partners include: in Afghanistan, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; in Bangladesh, Green Hill, an indigenous NGO; in India, North East Hill University (NEHU), and Sympodium for Advocacy on Himalayan Issues (SAHI); in Nepal, the Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal (FECOFUN), and the Local Development Training Academy (LDTA); and in Pakistan, the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), and Sungi Development Foundation

Expected long-term outcomes

- An established pool of resource persons in advocacy in mountain areas of the Himalayan region
- Advocacy literature is available for trainers, activists, and development workers involved in protecting the rights of marginalised mountain people
- Successful case studies are accessible for trainers, activists, and broader audiences
- Sensitised community-based organisations are able to raise their voice and represent the interests of mountain people in an effective manner
- A regional network is established for sharing and learning advocacy strategies



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Capacity Building of Community-Based Organisations in Advocacy in the Himalayas



Advocacy Knowledge and Skills for

- raising a voice on behalf of marginalised people
- achieving desired changes and reforms in policy
- improving governance practices

Advocacy as a means for improving governance

The participation of civil society organisations in development processes is a critical catalyst in protecting the rights of citizens. Mountain people in the Himalayas have been marginalised in many spheres of modern life including in mainstream policymaking. It is important to enable mountain people and their organisations that they can voice their concerns, issues, and interests in the societal arena.

In recent years, an increasingly organised civil society has demonstrated its ability to provide a broad forum for debate on policies affecting mountain life, from natural resource management to protection of human rights. A key focus of many of these institutions is empowering their constituents to undertake lawful advocacy to safeguard the rights of mountain people.

One of the central lessons learned is that innovations promoting sustainable development cannot be transferred to grassroot communities without considering governance, decentralisation, and democratisation issues. On the one hand, nearly all countries of the Himalayan region made efforts to strengthen decentralisation and devolution of power and responsibilities to local institutions. On the other, people have often not been able to claim those rights vested by national constitutions and laws. The concept of people-centred advocacy is to provide effective ways and means of claiming those citizen's rights in a meaningful manner.

The ICIMOD project

'Capacity Building of Community-Based Organisations in Advocacy Strategies in the Himalayas'

ICIMOD with substantial support from the Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation, The Netherlands (ICCO), helps governments, and non-government and community-based organisations in the region to enhance their understanding of advocacy and the application of advocacy concepts, strategies, tools, and techniques to promote the cause of mountain people and mountain development.

When the project began in 2002, there was a clear scarcity of literature and resource persons for advocacy in mountain areas. ICIMOD, together with partners started collecting, adapting, creating, and disseminating literature on advocacy in the form of a training of trainers manual, a resource book, workshop reports, case studies, and leaflets. A training manual and resource book was published by ICIMOD in English and translated and published in several languages by partner organisations. Encouraged by the successes of the first phase (2002-2005), ICCO is funding a second phase (2006-2008) and the project is expanding the activities in the region.



Pool of advocacy resource persons

A key objective of the project is to create a human resource pool in advocacy for the region following the 'training of trainers' approach.

The resource persons disseminate knowledge on meaningful people-centred advocacy to other development stakeholders at the community and civil society levels. By mid-2006, the project had trained over 180 individuals in five ICIMOD regional member countries to be master trainers in advocacy strategies. These master trainers have already trained more than 1,500 community members and activists in their own countries. Along with promoting advocacy strategies, the process of generating additional master trainers and supporting existing ones is continuing in all five countries of the project.

