



WORKSHOP

# Youth in agroecology: A new generation leverages climate resilience in agriculture

9–12 October 2023 | Surkhet, Karnali province

## About the workshop

We are organising a four-day learning workshop to bring together youths and young professionals from the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region and empower them to tackle agricultural challenges posed by climate change. The workshop combines classroom sessions, immersive field visits, and direct interactions with local farmers to impart participants with the essential knowledge, skills, and motivation needed to implement sustainable and climate-resilient farming practices.

## Objectives

- Provide participants with comprehensive knowledge and understanding of agroecological principles and practices
- Enhance participants' awareness of climate change impacts on agriculture and the urgent need for sustainable, resilient farming methods
- Foster interaction and knowledge exchange between participants, local farmers, and community members to promote dialogue and collaborative learning
- Inspire participants to become leaders for sustainable agriculture and climate resilience in their future careers and endeavours

## Expected outputs

- Formation of a network of professionals and students dedicated to promoting sustainable agriculture and climate resilience
- Improved awareness of climate change impacts on agriculture and resilient farming methods introduced
- Generation of knowledge products based on participants' experiential learning during the workshop

## Targeted audience

This workshop targets young professionals and students from the HKH region who have an academic and professional background in agriculture, environmental science, social science, or a related field.

## Learning approach

Our workshop adopts an immersive learning approach that is divided into two comprehensive modules. In Module 1, participants will delve into the technical aspects of agroecological approaches, comprehending their significance in strengthening climate resilience in agricultural ecosystems. Module 2 offers a hands-

on experience by directly engaging with farmers and local communities of the Surkhet and Dailekh districts. This direct interaction will provide a unique opportunity to gather insights from real-world field implementations of agroecological practices. This workshop will also include sessions on leadership and collaboration. Furthermore, community-level discussions will be facilitated, focusing on pivotal topics such as agroecology and permaculture principles, as well as climate-resilient agricultural practices and technologies. In addition, participants will create an action plan that outlines how they intend to integrate the insights gained from this experience into their upcoming endeavours.

## **Background**

In the HKH region, the use of chemical inputs, such as pesticides and insecticides, has increased over time to boost production and meet the demands of the growing population. Nepal is no exception to this trend; the amplified use of chemicals and the emphasis on a limited range of crops have elevated food production and played a vital role in addressing hunger challenges. However, these practices have also put a toll on the environment and ecosystems. Ensuring sufficient nutrition for most of the population remains a persistent challenge.

The heightened focus on a few specific crops has led to monocropping, resulting in the loss of agrobiodiversity, standardisation of agriculture, and degradation of the agroecosystem. Concurrently, the impacts of climate change, characterised by shifts in temperature and precipitation patterns, heightened hazard occurrences, and the deterioration of natural soil and water resources, have compounded the

risks to the sustainability of agricultural ecosystems. It is evident that we need to reconsider prevailing agricultural practices, emphasising the significance of natural farming and agroecological approaches. These approaches are essential for comprehensively addressing issues such as agrobiodiversity loss, climate change effects, ecosystem degradation, while also ensuring sustainable income and nutrition provision.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) have been actively championing such approaches in Nepal and the wider HKH region, advocating for the sustainability and resilience of agricultural ecosystems. A notable instance of this collaboration is the Green Resilient Agricultural Productive Ecosystems Project (GRAPE). Under the umbrella of the GRAPE project, ICIMOD spearheads the execution of GRAPE Field of Action-2 (FA- 2) in Nepal's Karnali and Sudurpashchim provinces. This initiative focuses on participatory action research and the showcasing of climate-resilient agricultural solutions to mitigate climate-related and socio-economic risks and vulnerabilities. The project places emphasis on gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) to foster green and productive agroecological systems, thereby supporting mountain livelihoods and contributing to the local economy. The core objective of GRAPE FA 2 is to enhance agroecosystem resilience through action research and knowledge generation, facilitating climate-resilient food production, and enhancing digital accessibility for farmers in selected demonstration sites. The knowledge and innovative solutions formulated through this initiative will subsequently be upscaled through experience sharing and engagement with provincial and national policymakers and relevant agencies.

## Agenda

Time (in NPT)	Programme	Speakers
<b>DAY 1: 9 October 2023</b>		
<b>Session Host: Santosh Raj Pathak, ICIMOD</b>		
09:00–10:30	<b>Opening session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Welcome remarks and introduction to ICIMOD</li> <li>– A brief introduction to the GRAPE project and its objectives</li> <li>– Structure of the workshop, introduction of the action plan and knowledge product</li> </ul>	<b>Abid Hussain, ICIMOD</b> <b>Rajendra Dhakal, ICIMOD</b> <b>Sunayana Basnet, ICIMOD</b>
	Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperative's (MoLMAC) role and vision in promoting sustainable farming	<b>Dhan Bdr. Khatayat, MoLMAC</b>
	Introduction of participants	<b>Santosh Raj Pathak, ICIMOD</b>
<b>Module 1: Understanding of the technical aspects of agroecological approaches and their importance for climate resilience and sustainability of agricultural ecosystems</b>		
10:30–11:30	<b>Technical session 1: Building resilience and sustainability in agricultural ecosystems through action research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Introduction to agroecology and its principles, emphasising its role in climate resilience and sustainability of agricultural ecosystems</li> <li>– Open floor discussion</li> </ul>	<b>Abid Hussain, ICIMOD</b>
11:30–11:45	Tea break and group photo	
11:45–12:45	<b>Technical session 2: Strengthening the agri-entrepreneurship ecosystem to ensure sustainability of agri-businesses</b>	<b>Shraddha Shakya, Antarprerana</b>
12:45–13:30	Lunch break	
13:30–14:30	Exploring innovative climate-resilient agriculture solutions. – Open floor discussion	<b>Abid Hussain, ICIMOD</b>
14:30–15:00	Experience sharing by the participants	<b>Xinyue Zhang, China</b> <b>Zakir Hussian, Pakistan</b> <b>Saru Mahat, Nepal</b>
15:00–16:15	<b>Technical session 3: Enhancing digital access for climate resilience in agriculture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Importance of digital tools for farmers, including agro-advisories, weather forecasting, and market information services</li> <li>– Practical demonstrations of digital access tools</li> </ul>	<b>Bobin Thapa, Geo Krishi</b>
16:15–17:30	<b>Technical session 4: Interrelation between youth, agriculture, and GESI</b>	<b>Binija Nepal, GIZ</b>
18:00–20:00	Reception dinner	

<b>DAY 2: 10 October 2023</b>		
09:00–09:15	Recap	Sunayana Basnet, ICIMOD
09:15–10:50	<b>Technical session 5: Intergenerational climate challenge: why it matters to youth</b>	Uttam Babu Shrestha, Global Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies
10:50–11:00	Tea Break	
11:00–12:45	<b>Technical session 6: Leadership and team dynamics</b>	Santosh Raj Pathak, ICIMOD
12:45–13:30	Lunch	
13:30–14:00	Overview of the field visit	Shankar Neupane, CEAPRED
14:00–17:30	Field visit to Birendranagar Municipality	
<b>DAY 3: 11 October 2023</b>		
09:00–17:30	Field visit to the Dailekh District (Dullu Municipality and Bhairabi Municipality)	
<b>DAY 4: 12 October 2023</b>		
08:00–10:30	Travel back to Surkhet	
10:30–11:30	Lunch break (Surkhet)	
11:30–15:00	Field Visit (Bheriganga Municipality)	Ram Deo Shah/ Shankhar Neupane, CEAPRED
15:00–17:00	Debriefing and experience sharing by participants and summary and way forward	Santosh Raj Pathak, ICIMOD
<b>DAY 4: 13 OCTOBER 2023</b>		
Travel back to Kathmandu		



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