

**SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL
RESOURCE BASE AND DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES
OF A MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY**

Bhardeo, Nepal



Kk Panday

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Mountain Environmental Management constitutes one of the four thematic research and development programmes of ICIMOD. The programme is concerned with sustainable use and management of natural resources in mountain areas and their development activities in the mountain environment. This programme is devoted to the scientific and technical understanding of the physical aspects of mountain environments, their development and management through appropriate research, state-of-the-art reviews, and field studies. Proper understanding of the functioning of natural systems and their relationships with the development needs of the people provide the basis for the sustainable development of mountain ecosystems.

This study on Bhardo Village is the first but not a 'grass roots' approach. It is an attempt to examine the very complex situation existing in the rural mountains today, namely the struggle to take out a minimum living from the steep slopes of the Himalayas, the wish to improve village living conditions, and the very real need to act on the awareness of the critical issue of decreasing resources.

The author has spent many years working at the 'grass roots' level in villages like Bhardo and has used his first-hand knowledge and experience to provide the urgent problem facing the thousands of hill/mountain villages in the region. He conducted the study under the auspices of the Mountain Environmental Management Programme of ICIMOD.

Foreword by

It is hoped that this study will provide useful insights to planners, policy-makers, and researchers in the field of mountain development. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development is pleased to sponsor this study as a contribution to the understanding of the complex mountain environment. The study is a part of the Mountain Environmental Management Programme of ICIMOD.

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Kk Panday

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Foreword

Mountain Environmental Management constitutes one of the four thematic research and development programmes at ICIMOD. The programme is concerned with sustainable use and management of natural resources and the impact of development activities on the mountain environment. This programme is devoted to the scientific and technical understanding of biophysical aspects of mountain environment vis-a-vis traditional and modern human-use systems through appropriate research, state-of-the-art reviews, and field studies. Proper understanding of the functioning of natural systems and their interrelationships with the development needs of the people provide the basis for the sustainable development of mountain ecosystems.

This study on Bhardeo Village is one that has used a grass roots' approach. It is an attempt to examine the very real paradoxes existing in the rural mountains today; namely the struggle to eke out a subsistence living from the vanishing topsoils of the Himalayas; the wish to improve village living conditions; and the very real need to act on the awareness of the critical issue of decreasing resources.

The author has spent many years working at the grass roots' level in villages like Bhardeo and has used his first-hand knowledge and experience to portray the urgent problems facing the thousands of hill/mountain villages in Nepal today. He conducted the study under the auspices of the Mountain Environmental Management Programme of ICIMOD.

It is hoped that this study will provide useful insights to planners, policy-makers, and field-workers and help to make the implementation of development schemes at grass roots' level more effective than hitherto. The small farmer is the most important client in the context of agricultural plans, off-farm and non-farm income-generating projects, and environmental and resource rehabilitation schemes. This study places the small farmer where she or he belongs, at the very centre of development activities.

E.F. Tacke
Director General

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Kk Panday

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