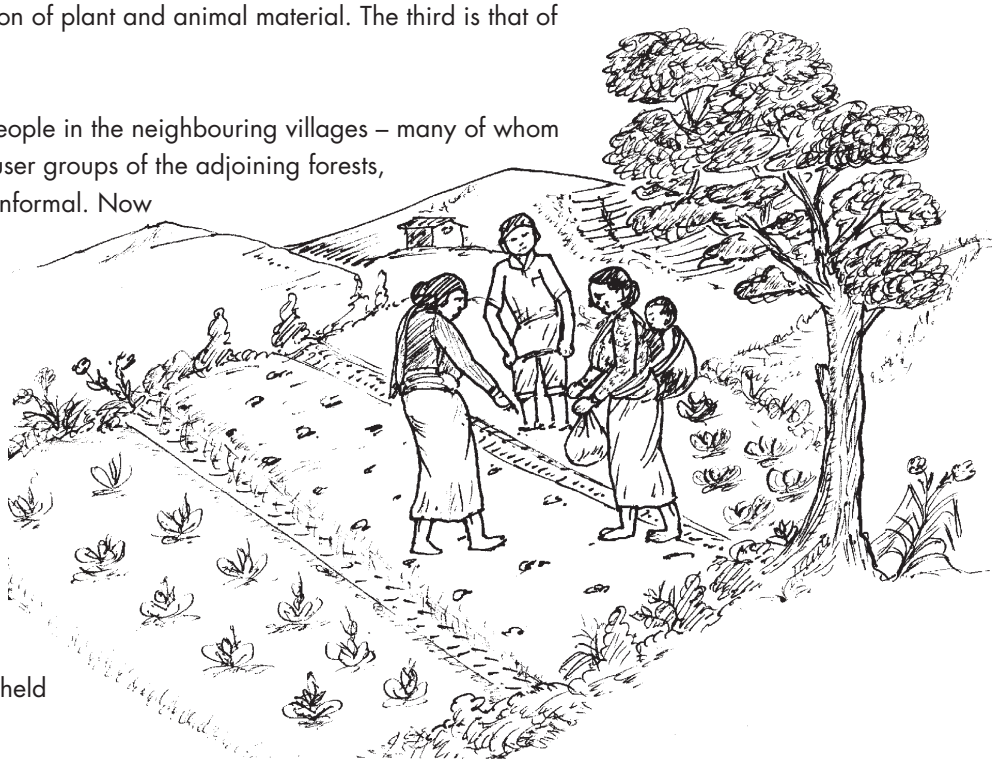
ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

Community Outreach – Off-site Demonstration and Training and Provision of Materials

From the very beginning, ICIMOD has focused on developing a variety of approaches for sharing the knowledge and experience gained at the demonstration site with those who can benefit from it best – farmers at the grass roots level. One method has been the holding of formal training courses and hosting of visitors, activities that are described in more detail in the sheet on Training and Visitors. Another has been the distribution of plant and animal material. The third is that of direct contact with communities off-site.

There has always been close contact with people in the neighbouring villages – many of whom work at the site – and with members of the user groups of the adjoining forests, but until now these exchanges were mostly informal. Now ICIMOD is embarking on an ambitious programme of community outreach, working with NGO partners and others and through other ICIMOD projects to increase the impact of activities and to scale up the use of technologies tested and demonstrated at the Godavari site. These activities are not confined to the local villages, some are with communities as far afield as Namche Bazaar in the Everest region and Meghalaya in India. In some cases scaling up takes place following training of participants at courses held at the Godavari site.



Scaling Up Technologies

There are three main thrusts of the scaling up efforts.

Collaboration with the NGO 'Educate The Children/Nepal'

'Educate The Children/Nepal' is working with ICIMOD to help the vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalised women and children of the Tamang community in the villages of Chapakharka and Tripeni in the Phulchowki watershed to adopt various technologies tested and demonstrated at the Godavari site that can contribute to improving their livelihoods. The methodologies include preparation of bio-briquettes from unwanted biomass (mostly the forest weed banmara) for use as fuel for cooking, water harvesting for irrigating vegetables, vegetable backyard gardening, planting of fodder and fruit plants, and conservation farming. Some technologies like drip irrigation are demonstrated in farmer's fields in these villages rather than at the Godavari site itself (see Sheet 4: Water Management).

Networking with and support of forest user groups

A network has been established among the community forest user groups (CFUGs) of Phulchowki watershed, the District Forest Office Lalitpur, the Regional Forest Training Centre Godavari, the District Soil Conservation Office Lalitpur, and ICIMOD. ICIMOD and the other members of the network share their experiences of forest regeneration and forest management for mutual benefit. ICIMOD has provided training in the use of GIS and GPS for forest data management to forestry officials as a support method for the preparation of forest inventories (a prerequisite for handover to a user group) and work plans for the CFUGs for the conservation and management of the community forests.

Participatory 3-dimensional modelling (Training Centre)

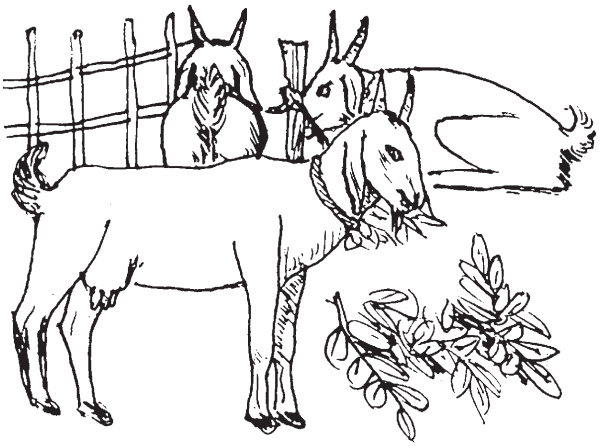
Participatory 3-dimensional models are topographical models of a local area constructed using available maps and the knowledge of local residents to show the important features for people's lives and local decision-making. A model of the Phulchowki watershed (in which ICIMOD's Godavari site is located) was constructed at Godavari with the active participation of representatives of the six community forest user groups, farmers, women groups, forest officials, and other agencies. The model shows all the natural resources and infrastructure of the area and is now being used as a planning tool by community and development agencies. Following the successful completion of this trial, the method has been extended to other areas, notably the villages surrounding Nokrek National Park in Meghalaya, India (a joint project with IFAD), and the remote area of Upper Mustang in Nepal.

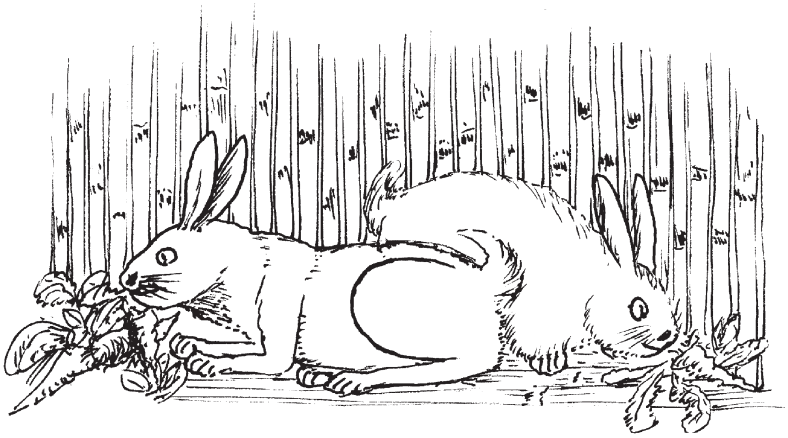
Distribution of Material

Large amounts of seeds and seedlings of useful plants from ICIMOD's plant nursery have been distributed to farmers and farmers groups, projects – especially rehabilitation projects, government agencies, and partner organisations from ICIMOD's member countries. They include seeds and seedlings of trees and shrubs for forestry regeneration, nitrogen-fixing hedgerows, and other vegetation management purposes; and seeds and plants of fruit and vegetable species for income generation activities. In one trial, seeds of a hybrid cereal (Triticale) obtained from Bhutan were successfully used in Mustang, Nepal, to provide a well-adapted and efficient fodder species. Livestock improvement has also been carried out by providing the services of ICIMOD's improved breed goats, and Angora rabbits for breeding have been distributed for income generation.

Material provided to farmers and others since 1993

- 95 pairs German Angora rabbits provided to farmers in Nepal and Pakistan
- 1557 new improved goat off-spring in surrounding villages as a result of the services provided by improved breed male goats
- More than 250 kg of seeds and 600,000 seedlings of nitrogen-fixing plants and other useful species provided to various users including the Rehabilitation Site Kavre, PARDYP, NARC (Nepal Agricultural Research Council), Dept. of Soil Conservation and Water Management (DoSC&WM), ARLDF-Nepal, Leasehold Forestry – JICA, and visitors from ICIMOD regional member countries
- 11,400 fruit plants; 420 kg vegetable seeds, and many seedlings provided to farmers





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