

Introduction

This paper raises some basic issues and advances a few propositions in the context of approaches to development planning in mountain regions. It is based on the premise that the development of mountain areas, with the aim of sustainable improvement in the lives of the people inhabiting them, needs an integrated approach on two fronts: One, integration of environmental considerations in development planning and, two, clear understanding and concrete operationalisation of intersectoral linkages in an area-based planning framework.

The propositions and arguments advanced in this paper are already widely known. In fact, many of them can be found in the work carried out by ICIMOD in the past.¹ Additionally, they have been emphasised in international fora, particularly in the documents of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) urging *“interested governments, with the support of the international community, to prepare and implement comprehensive national and/or local mountain development programmes in relevant countries as outlined in Chapter 13 of Agenda 21: The Mountain Agenda.”*²

An attempt has been made in this paper to draw implications of various propositions advanced in relation to mountain development for planning and programme formulation, particularly in the context of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan Region. This exercise is expected to help develop principal components of a training programme and a programme for studies and research to generate inputs for training on integrated development planning in mountain areas.

The paper is organised in five parts. Part One deals with a possible approach to devising plans for the promotion of development activities within the constraints imposed by mountain ecology. Part Two argues for an integrated, rather than a purely sectoral, planning approach. Part Three deals with human resources' development with a special focus on the role of women in development. Part Four discusses various concepts of 'area' as a unit of planning and their suitability to mountain regions. And, the last part, recapitulating the earlier propositions and arguments, draws implications for planning methodology.