

Development of Poor Mountain Areas

Editors

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FOREWORD

International Forum on Development of Poor Mountain Areas

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R. P. Panick
Director General

FOREWORD

Poverty alleviation is a target that has been at the forefront of international development efforts since the very beginning of what we may now refer to as the development era. Following the end of the colonial era, it became all too obvious that a number of nations needed extraordinary development inputs in order to ensure that their citizens would be able to fulfill their basic needs - and indeed this realisation grew along with the conceptualisation that the fulfillment of their basic needs is every human beings' right. Within this global perspective, poverty alleviation became the focus of development efforts.

ICIMOD, the first international centre in the field of mountain development, was founded out of widespread recognition of environmental degradation of mountain habitats and the increasing poverty of mountain communities. As such, ICIMOD is concerned with the search for more effective development responses to promote the sustained well-being of mountain people.

It is within this perspective, and in accordance with its mandate to act as a focal point for the mobilisation, conduct, and coordination of applied and problem-solving research activities, that ICIMOD forms and supports linkages that help it disseminate all aspects of knowledge on the Hindu Kush-Himalayan area. Of critical importance are measures to alleviate poverty among the poor of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas.

The experiences in China are enriching to the field and, indeed, reinforced by those insights brought from other areas to this workshop on Poverty Alleviation. ICIMOD is grateful to have had the opportunity to collaborate with the State Council Leading Group for Economic Development of Poor Areas and the Chinese Academy of Science of the People's Republic of China to run this workshop. Many thanks are due to the Ford Foundation for its sponsorship and to their Representative in China, Mr. Nick Menzies, for his help and participation.

This made it possible for the first time in the short history of ICIMOD to bring together scholars and development workers from major mountain regions in the world to interact with those from China's mountain areas.

I am confident that the result of this cross-fertilisation of ideas and experiences is not only a unique volume of excellent articles and scientific treatises but a reference and encouragement for policy-makers and development workers engaged in improving the livelihood of the hundreds of millions of people inhabiting the mountain areas in China and all over the developing world.

Finally I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mahesh Banskota and Pitamber Sharma for working on the technical aspects of the document. A great deal of effort was expended on their part and thanks are due to them for this.

E. Pelinck
Director General

Editorial Preface

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This is a Report on the "International Forum on Development of Poor Mountain Areas", held in Beijing during March 1993. It is divided into three parts. Part One describes the objectives of the workshop, gives an account of the inauguration, and gives a summary of the Workshop presentation and discussions. Part Two of this volume consists of papers that present different mountain development issues and approaches from different mountain regions of the world. It also discusses some of the general problems of poverty measurement and interventions of relevance to mountain development approaches in China. It should be remembered that a key objective behind this workshop was to place before concerned Chinese institutions and policy-makers the overall experience with poverty eradication and mountain development in other areas. Part three focusses on the Chinese experience. It highlights the issues related to the definition and measurement of poverty in China and presents a wide range of reviews regarding field level experience and impact of different poverty-related programmes in mountain areas of China. The papers and reportage on projects clearly show the wealth of experience that has been gained in China regarding poverty reduction. It is probably for the first time that such a rich experience in poverty eradication efforts in China's mountain areas has been brought together in one volume.

In view of the large volume of materials generated for the workshop, ICIMOD has had to devote a good deal of time to bringing this report to a reasonable size without losing the overall substance of the workshop. In the process of finalisation of the workshop proceedings for publication, it has not been possible to consult and discuss each of the papers with their authors. This would have taken an inordinately long time and some discretion has been exercised by ICIMOD in reducing the length of some of the papers. The focus has been on bringing out the main issues raised by the paper. For this purpose, almost all the papers in Part III have been shortened to some extent, while highlighting comprehensive sets of major issues.

The editors are fully aware of the wide range of subjects discussed at the workshop and reported in this volume and care has been taken to ensure that this is adequately reflected. This is a time when poverty eradication and mountain development are both undergoing very fundamental rethinking in terms of better understanding of its complex dimensions and in identifying more effective methods and approaches for better integrating socioeconomic aspects with environmental concerns. This report on the workshop, with its discussion of broader issues as well as those specific to China's experience, provides a rich basis for reexamining alternatives and what might or might not work in the battle against poverty eradication in general and in mountain development more specifically.

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Glossary

1 US\$ =	8.68 Yuan		
1 <i>mu</i> =	1/6 <i>acre</i>	=	1/15 hectare
1 <i>jin</i> =	1.33 pounds	=	0.5 kilogramme