

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

The Centre was established in 1983, and commenced professional activities in 1984. Though international in its concerns, ICIMOD focuses on the specific, complex, and practical problems of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan Region which covers all or part of eight Sovereign States.

ICIMOD serves as a multidisciplinary documentation centre on integrated mountain development; a focal point for the mobilisation, conduct, and coordination of applied and problem-solving research activities; a focal point for training on integrated mountain development, with special emphasis on the assessment of training needs, the development of relevant training materials based directly on field case studies; and a consultative centre providing expert services on mountain development and resource management.

Mountain Population and Employment constitutes one of the four thematic research and development programmes at ICIMOD. The main goal of the programme is to identify viable off-farm alternatives and practical approaches to employment generation, income enhancement, and sustainability of mountain environments. Currently, the major focus of the programme is on three interrelated topics: (1) assessment of critical issues and options in mountain off-farm employment; (2) environmental regeneration and employment promotion through rural women's organisations; and (3) promotion of small towns and market centres for decentralised mountain development.

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