

Start of the New Medium-Term Action Plan

The review leading to ICIMOD's new Strategic Framework and Medium-Term Action Plan (MTAP) examined where ICIMOD can make a difference as a regional organisation. As a result, ICIMOD is in transition to becoming a knowledge, learning and enabling organisation that facilitates knowledge access and transfer across the region and from providers to users.

The year 2008 has been a time of preparing to embark on new approaches for this next five-year cycle. ICIMOD's new strategy is to work through thematic programmes and regional approaches to promote adaptation to climate change in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region. The regional approaches intend to implement programmes in at least four member countries working with similar methods and customising international technology to the regional situation.

The programme teams have an interdisciplinary structure to work in Action Areas. This has resulted in staff collectively collaborating, designing, and implementing planned activities under the three thematic programmes and nine action areas within ICIMOD and with our RMC partners.

ICIMOD is consolidating and realigning previous and ongoing programmes by reorienting them in the new strategic programmes. Furthermore it is reorienting from wet ecosystems in the east to dry ecosystems in the west and applying the learning from monsoon system areas to the more arid landscapes.

The staff conducted a series of workshops in each of the eight member countries, to identify the priority areas which would be a basis for promotion of regional programmes. Country consultations discussed the synergy across countries and linking partners with the same strategies for more regional ownership. The outcomes of this exercise have been mixed because national objectives and priorities clearly superseded regional and transboundary approaches. ICIMOD has not yet been in a position to exert the role of a methodological facilitator and leader. The experience proved that the objectives set for the year might have been rather ambitious.

Internal Change Management

Implementation of the new MTAP is requiring an intensive change management programme within ICIMOD. It involves the whole staff in capacity development to become a modern service delivery organisation.

In 2008, the staff participated intensively in capacity development events; this phase of consolidating the changes will last for 2–3 years. The topics covered in 2008 included management by objectives, interdisciplinary team building, leadership, conflict management, and project cycle management. This called for intensive training, coaching, and internal administrative changes.

The internal change management process includes

- mainstreaming gender, governance, and economical analysis by creating interdisciplinary working teams in Action Areas; and
- strengthening gender in the whole institution and conducting gender assessments for three of seven IFAD projects, which improved their contracts and policies.

ICIMOD's capacity to plan, design, and implement through partners will be increased by

- revising the system of annual planning to prepare detailed plans on a quarterly basis;
- working with partners that do fieldwork so ICIMOD transfers knowledge among them but partners are autonomous;
- delegating budget responsibility to the action area team leaders;
- creating the basis for a modern analytical accounting system;
- addressing where performance can be better with behaviour and development objectives connected to ICIMOD objectives; and
- introducing timesheets and charge-out rates charged within ICIMOD – which helps leaders to see under or over spending and gives a more realistic view of actual costs



Gender Assessments

– Creating more awareness and systematic consideration of gender

“Since we did the gender assessment, we are so aware of designing our activities so that they do not increase the workload of women, ”

say **Yi Shaoliang** and **Muhammad Ismail**, two of ICIMOD’s rangeland specialists.

Since the adoption of its Gender Equity Policy in 2007, ICIMOD has started the long task of institutionalising gender into all its programmes. The first programme to conduct a gender assessment was the Rangeland Resources Management programme at three of its sites: Mustang, Nepal; Ladakh, India; and Chitral, Pakistan.

The team is still learning about the issues and cannot yet claim a significant impact, but the experience has brought a new awareness to the ICIMOD staff members involved. The information obtained does present challenges and implications for the programme as it designs its new projects. The gender assessment revealed specific information, such as that rangeland women work an average of 17 hours per day while most rangeland men work about 8 hours per day. The rangeland programme is now using this information to ensure that it plans activities so that women can participate without increasing their workloads. The gender analysis further illustrated the critical importance of fuel efficient and drudgery reducing technologies and innovations to address the practical and productive needs of women.

The programme organised a workshop to make its partners aware of the gender issues in the rangeland and their implication on rangeland resources management. The data was very important for generating this awareness. The gender team acknowledges that institutionalising gender takes time. However, the first indicator that gender has started being more institutionalised in the organisation is that more ICIMOD professionals are requesting support from the gender team and administrative staff are asking for more capacity building on gender.