



World Mountain Forum

Mountains for our future

Mbale, Uganda, 17-20 October 2016



Theme 2: Mountain Communities and livelihoods



The World Mountain Forum (WMF) is a platform for mountain stakeholders (scientists, civil society, private sector, communities and policy makers) to discuss Sustainable Mountain Development issues and drive action that helps harness the potential of mountains as pillars of sustainable development and at the same time increasing the mountain communities' capacity to adapt to the various environmental, economic and social changes that are happening around the world.

1. Background

About 12 percent of the world's population lives in the mountains, but over 50 percent are directly or indirectly dependent on mountain resources (FAO, 2000). Of the 718 million people who live in mountain areas, 625 million live in developing and transition countries, a fact which exacerbates their difficult living conditions where countries have limited

resources to develop infrastructures and thus the development of these areas is challenged. While mountains provide various services to mountain communities, there is widespread poverty among mountain inhabitants, loss of indigenous knowledge and serious problems of ecological deterioration in these areas.

2. Why mountain communities need special attention for sustainable development?



Mountain communities have been at the periphery of decision-making in the context of overall development in many countries. As a result, most global mountain areas are experiencing environmental and social well-being degradation. Their marginalization makes them even more sensitive to environmental degradation.



Poverty, unemployment, poor health, food insecurity, lack of access to potable water and good sanitation are widespread in mountain areas.



In spite of the enormous amount of indigenous knowledge in the mountains, education and health delivery systems are very poor, particularly in the context of women and children.



Practices in farming and grazing that enabled people to thrive in the past may not continue to be effective as ecosystems degrade, population dynamics shift and a rapidly changing world puts pressure on communities.

This session will share experiences and discuss strategies for better integrated community development in mountain areas through effective participation of local people as a key to preventing further ecological imbalance, increase the productive base, share equitable benefits, sustainably improve the standard of living among the large rural population living in mountain ecosystems, and discuss how mountain-specific development policies should work.

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Event hashtag: #WMF_2016