

# PEOPLE'S KNOWLEDGE - INTEGRAL TO EMPOWERMENT

“An Experience based on the grassroots initiatives taken in few Himalayan villages”

# Background

- Himalayas: young, ecologically fragile,
- ‘Human Adaptation Mechanisms/People’s Knowledge- “Knowledge, Innovations and Practices”
- Experience, observation and experiments over generations/centuries
- Stories, songs, rituals, folklore, beliefs, laws, practices in areas
- Collective asset: used, shared, transferred easily, informally, freely

# People Knowledge- a collective social asset

- Help survive ,secure livelihood
- Conserves resources, cost effective, socially desirable
- Economically affordable: within access of poor
- Environmental friendly
- Sustainable

# Holders & Practitioners

- Repositories- women and the marginalised
  - \* Not given due recognition, acknowledgement,
  - \* Highly laborious, manual, time consuming tasks-considered unskilled
  - \* “Women not considered Farmers”- 99% work by them
  - \* Research, Policies, Prog.: not focussed on women
- New scenario: situation worsened

# Empowering process

- Access and control
- Familiar, understanding
- Locally managed, own solutions to critical problems
- community based decision making-food security, natural resources, health etc.
- participate in development dialogue in shaping their own agenda- at all levels
- Self esteem, self confidence and control over their own lives
- Learn, hear, listen - exchange, connect, engage: the process

## .....Contd

- upgrade -equity and equality,sustainability,productivity and empowering
- Discard -discriminatory, violent,

# Our Experiences/Approach

- Participatory research
- Enriching research-not extractive
- People's knowledge based community planning-identifying the needs till monitoring and evaluation and beyond
- Participatory analysis and documentation
- Community based organisations
- Awareness generation, understanding ,capacity building

# Realms.....

- Food Security: seeds, manure, other agri practices
- Natural resources: ways to sustainably use and manage the resources
- Health: promotive, preventive and curative - food, herbs, practices
- Crafts: Innovations - skill and knowledge
- Documentation: resources & knowledge: seeds, forest, species, implements/craft items, recipes, non cultivable varieties etc
- Increasing and improving : I G and livelihood
- Using traditional (songs, plays) medium : raise social concerns

# Outcome

- People : Particularly women & marginalised
- \* More aware , better understanding of issues
- \* Fight and exert rights over their resources, against discrimination, violation
- \* Decide about processes affecting their lives
- \* Leadership role
- \* Development of pdts to reduce women's & poor workload
- \* Documents of knowledge
- \* Linkages with acadmc institutions

# Challenges/Questions

- IPR and documentation
- Upgradation: balancing the new and traditional
- Meet the challenges of globalisation, liberalisation, privatisation
- Do away with unhealthy practices
- Fight and exert rights
- They encompass life. Can they be categorised!
- Scientific validation/ People's experience!
- Linkages between informal and formal knowledge systems