

Submitted Abstract

ID IMC22-FSAbstr- 189

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Country	Germany
Region	Western Europe
Title	Youth Aspirations, Migration And Challenges In Indian Himalaya.
Keywords	Youth Aspirations, Migration, Mountain Development, Youth Entrepreneurship, Local Livelihoods
Type	List Of Focus Session
Focus Session ID	80

Abstract

Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) stretches across 13 states and union territories of India and occupies about 20% of the country's geographical area. These states are some of the most developmentally disadvantaged ones in the country. Uttarakhand is a north Indian Himalayan state created in 2000 with the promise of development specifically keeping in mind the difficult and disconnected lives of people in Himalayan mountains. 20 years on little has changed. Rural, local economies failed to develop and most families in rural villages are dependent on young family members migrating to plains for even survival. This research is based on 1-year field work in Almora district of Uttarakhand comprised of a survey of 670 students in 21 senior secondary school youth, teachers, families, civil society members, NGO workers and state administration stakeholders on youth aspirations, livelihood, migration and development politics. Combining the findings from multiple sources, this research study takes a close look at the lives, aspirations of mountain youth and their challenges in the region where outmigration is the norm. It examines the drivers of rapid outmigration among young people and the impact of such migration on the youth who are still in the mountains. It also highlights some of the potential solutions that youth envision for the sustainable development of their villages and society.