



The Mountain Partnership Products initiative (Thematic project) (2015 - ongoing)



Throughout the centuries, mountain communities have created highly diversified economic systems to protect their livelihoods from the uncertainties of their harsh and unpredictable environments. Mountain agriculture is, therefore, often highly biodiverse, based on family farming, small-scale and inherently green. This has allowed preservation of traditional knowledge and practices, resulting in many mountain products of particular high quality. Because of the low volumes of production and distance from the markets, mountain farmers are, however, often confronted with very long value chains that include many middlemen, making the profit for the farmers inadequate. In spite of their hard work, the price obtained is often not equitable. Further, their products are often sold alongside products of much lower quality.

Building on the raising consumer demand for high-quality, traditional products, the Mountain Partnership Secretariat has promoted a project to ensure that producers can receive fair compensation for their work, consumers can recognise mountain products in the marketplace, and traditional products and techniques can be preserved.

Goal

The ultimate goal is that of improving the livelihoods and local economies of mountain communities by strengthening the value chain and marketing techniques for high-quality mountain products.

Achievements

The MPP Initiative by Mountain Partnership (MP) and Slow Food has developed a participatory certification and labelling scheme for small mountain producers from developing countries, and is currently operating in seven countries for 16 products. Those products range from coffee produced in the Panamanian Central Cordillera to herbal tea and rice grown in the Indian Himalayas. Twenty four producers' organizations have already benefited from this initiative and the labelling scheme has, in some cases, contributed to an increase in the selling price of 25 percent and production of 40 percent in two years.

In the Philippines, the government's Department of Tourism has developed, with Slow Food and MP, a pilot scheme to promote links between high-quality



mountain products and ecotourism services. Partnerships with IFOAM-Organics International, NaturaSi and other private-sector organizations have been developed in order to boost marketing and distribution channels.

Outputs

Value-chain development:

- strengthened value chains for high-value mountain products and sustainable food systems;
- expanded market opportunities for mountain products.

Capacity development:

- enhanced institutional, technical, entrepreneurial and marketing capacities of producers and institutions to promote mountain products.

Resilient mountain environment:

- rehabilitation of degraded mountain areas through the farming of environmental friendly products;
- protection of the rich mountain biodiversity in particular climate-resilient crops;
- improved food security and nutrition in key regions of the world.



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