

WOCAN

Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN) implemented the *Institutionalizing Gender-responsive Research and Development through Women's Networks* project with partners in Nepal, Lao PDR and India to integrate gender into the policies, structures and processes of the Departments of Agriculture of Nepal, Meghalaya and Sikkim, the International Centre for Agriculture Research (India), and various NGOs within Nepal and NE India including the Eastern Himalayan Initiative, the North East Network and WOCAN Nepal. This was done through developing the capacity of staff to act as change agents for gender mainstreaming within these institutions, and through the provision of training on women's leadership and value chain analysis for mountain women in Sikkim and Nepal.

The significant outcomes of this project include: the adoption of a legal framework in Sikkim which sets a precedent for the establishment of Gender Working Groups beyond the Department of Agriculture to other sections of the government; a Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan that has been approved by senior leadership and is currently being implemented in the Meghalaya Department of Agriculture; and the support, through funds and policy establishment, for a Gender Working Group in the Department of Agriculture in Nepal by the Director General. In the context of the new national policy of Social Inclusion, the Department of Agriculture stands to be a model for other government bodies to establish organizational structures and mechanisms to become accountable to their clients and end users (farmers, particularly poor, rural women).