Presentation dedicated to the 10th anniversary since Utah Valley University hosted the First International Women of the Mountains Conference on March 8-9, 2007
Student Contributions to Empowering Mountain Women (SDG5) and Sustainable Mountain Development (SDG6.6 and SDG15.1) by hosting International Women of the Mountains Conference 2007

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Presenters:
Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University

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One UN Hotel, Manhattan Room, 2nd Floor

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March 14, 2017
Utah Valley University Delegation at CSW 61

1) Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, Lecturer, History and Political Science Department, Advisor for Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), Utah Valley University (UVU);

2) Dr. Cholpon Akmatalieva, Adjunct Instructor, History and Political Science Department, UVU;

3) Kimberly Williamson, Administrative Support III, History and Political Science Department, UVU

4) Tony Medina, President of UIMF (2014-2016);

5) Christian Jensen, President of UIMF;

6) Regan Warner, Vice President, Sustainable Mountain development Club, UVU

7) Munkhbat Batmunkh, Vice President, UIMF

8) Meerim Abdrisaeva, UVU student
Who we are -
We are a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University created in 2011. We focus on advocacy of gender and sustainable mountain development agendas of the United Nations in State of Utah and North America through student experiential learning.

Our Purpose -
1) Raise awareness of mountain sustainability topics.
2) Bring the public into contact with international guests and foreign dignitaries.
3) Bring communities together to recognize their shared mountainous heritage.
4) Offer students a chance to make connection that will benefit them as they move into their careers.
Utah Valley University Partnership with the United Nations

Utah Valley University:

1) Became a member of the Mountain Partnership under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2006 (www.mountainpartnership.org);

2) Hosts International Women of the Mountain Conferences as major grassroots event in North America to promote gender and sustainable mountain development (SMD) agendas of the United Nations since 2007
International Women of the Mountains
Conferences

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The main goal of the conferences is to mobilize communities in North America to contribute to the promotion of gender and sustainable development among mountain communities worldwide

www.womenofthemountains.org
The First International Conference “Women of the Mountains:”

- Was hosted on March 8th-10th, 2007 by UVU together with the Kyrgyz National Center for Development of Mountain Regions;
- Was held under the auspice of the United Nations, the World Bank and the United States Department of State;
- Gathered more than 110 experts from 21 mountainous states worldwide and 9 Rocky Mountain states of the Northern America.
• To understand the need to share our experiences in overcoming challenges caused by nature, by remoteness and by high altitude – all of which afflict mountain communities, families and women and contribute to poverty, terrorism, etc.

• To agree that it is better to exchange experiences as equal partners and human-beings rather than make attempts to explain our problems based on differences along ethnic, religious, etc. lines.
The First International Women of the Mountains Conference:

- Has created a regional network of institutions in North America to contribute to the promotion of gender and SMD globally;
- Adopted the final document “The Orem Declaration of Mountain Women,” as the roadmap for involvement of North American communities in gender and SMD activities globally and commitment to gather it with alternating sites between Utah and different mountain nations depending on funding;
- Was funded from local sources as contribution to UN gender and SMD agendas;
- [www.womenofthemountains.org](http://www.womenofthemountains.org)
2009 UN Secretary General’s Report on SMD highlighted Utah Valley University for hosting the conference, as contribution to the gender and SMD agenda, the only University in North America.
The Second International Women of the Mountain Conference:

- Was gathered at UVU in March 2012;
- Strengthened regional approach in the promotion of gender issues;
- Encouraged membership in the Mountain Partnership and Mountain Forum;
- Engaged students in hosting and providing protocol for the event;

UVU students contributed to the report on sustainable mountain development for the U.N. conference RIO+20 in June 2012
The Second International Women of the Mountain Conference:

- Involved youth, through a workshop for high-school students from Utah, and creation of a students’ organizing committee;
- Was funded from local sources as contribution to UN gender and SMD agendas;
- [www.womenofthemountains.org](http://www.womenofthemountains.org)
For the first time was held abroad in Puno, Peru in June 2012;

Discussed pressing issues concerning mountain families, women and communities in the Andean regions of Peru and surrounding countries;

Was implemented as service learning project by UVU and funded from local sources as contribution to UN gender and SMD agendas;

www.womenofthemountains.org
The Third International Women of the Mountain Conference:

Implemented a number of decisions of the Orem Declaration of Mountain Women, which aimed to:

• Strengthen the regional alliances in the promotion of gender issues globally;
• Encourage membership in the UN Mountain Partnership;
• Alternate convention sites between Utah and the other mountainous countries around the world, with the aim of identifying and resolving problems which women in mountainous regions face.
The Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference:

- Held under the umbrella of the Mountain Partnership affiliated to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN;
- For the first time was hosted by the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at UVU, as experiential learning initiative;
- Was hosted at UVU on October 7-9, 2015
Continued the traditions of previous conferences to promote gender and SMD agendas of the UN in State of Utah and North America;

Contributed to the implementation of mountain targets among Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations in State of Utah and North America;

Implemented a decisions of the Orem Declaration of Mountain Women about encouraging contributions from North American communities to the promotion and implementation of gender and SMD agendas of the UN globally;

Sustained Utah Valley University’s approach on student “Community Engaged Learning” through promotion of gender and SMD activities on local, regional and global levels;

Was funded from local sources as contribution to the promotion of gender and SMD agendas of the United Nations;

www.womenofthemountains.org
2016 UN Secretary General’s Report on SMD featured for the first time the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at UVU for:
- Hosting the Fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference;
- Contributing for implementation of SDG #5 on Gender, SDG # 6 and SDG #15

Summary

Mountain and upland areas have a universal importance: they provide water and other global goods and services to humanity. However, mountains ecosystems are highly vulnerable to climate change, extreme weather events and land degradation and recover slowly from disasters and shocks. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States pledged to leave no one behind and stressed the importance of reaching the furthest behind first. Mountain communities in developing countries are particularly vulnerable and require special attention, given that one in three people in those areas is at risk of hunger and malnutrition.

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the targets relating to mountains as well as to poverty, hunger, sustainable agriculture, climate change and gender equality, there is a need to prioritize mountain areas by focusing on the specific challenges they face and the opportunities they provide. Mountain-specific policies and the inclusion of mountain communities in decision-making processes and capacity development can improve the livelihoods of communities while also conserving and restoring mountain ecosystems. In particular, efforts should be made to increase scientific knowledge of mountains and collect disaggregated data for trend analysis, policy advice and, ultimately, for change.

39. The Utah International Mountain Forum hosted the fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference at Utah Valley University in October 2016 to address the critical issues faced by women and children living in mountainous regions across the globe and provide a forum to discuss gender equality. The outcome document contained the following observations:
(a) Goal 5 could be achieved through strong support for improving women’s rights and welfare, including women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in public, economic and social life;
(b) Successful implementation of target 6.6 could be achieved by supporting the vital role that women play in the protection of the environment and water sources, particularly as custodians of traditional knowledge that builds resilience and allows for adaptation to climate change;
(c) With respect to target 15.1, women play a critical role in joint planning as promoters of innovation, development and cooperation for common benefit.

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