

# World Yak Herders Association project -WYHA (Phase 2)

A YURTA Association's project for 2018

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## CONCEPT NOTE

### INTRODUCTION: Background and Objectives

- **The World Yak Herders Association project** is an initiative to create a socio-economic platform for those indigenous communities living in the High Asia region who base its livelihood on ancestral agro-pastoral practices, with yak husbandry as a fundamental pillar.
- **Inspired in the already existing** World Reindeer Herders Association, there is a consensus among all the stakeholders involved (FAO, YURTA, ICIMOD, AKDN, Indigenous Communities, NGOs., National Institutions) that the process to formally establish the WYHA has first to pass through the formation of **yak herders associations at local, national and regional levels**, before assuming the supra-regional structure.
- **This process implies, however, a previous exercise of Community Dialogue (CD)**, and so, the First Phase of the WYHA project (2016-2017), already concluded, was consequently denominated “**Community Dialogues in High Asia**”.
- However, due to different reasons, **four countries couldn't be included in this First Phase of High Asia's Community Dialogues**: China, Bhutan, Pakistan and Afghanistan, therefore a Second Phase is required to complete the previous task of organizing these pastoral networks in some way, adapting the CD (Community Dialogue) general scheme to the special circumstances of these countries as it was before done in India, Nepal, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia. Moreover, the Community Dialogue process in Kyrgyzstan should be also completed by the implementation of one extra workshop.
- **Summarizing**, the Phase 2 of the Community Dialogues in High Asia of the WYHA Project would consist of the following actions, some of them considered as a PRIORITY:
  1. BHUTAN: Institutional Dialogue in Bhutan to explore ways of including the country in the WYHA scheme. Main partner: Royal Government of Bhutan.
  2. AFGHANISTAN: Community Dialogue in Wakhan corridor. A demanded inclusion from the Aga Khan Development Network (AGDN) and the Ministry of the Agriculture of Afghanistan, acting so as key partners.
  3. PAKISTAN: Community Dialogue in Gilgil-Baltistan. A demanded inclusion from ICIMOD. Main partners would be ICIMOD and AKDN.
  4. CHINA: Community Dialogue would be co-organized with Chinese Institutions by the ICIMOD mediation, and implemented by provinces (Gansu, Sichuan, Qinghai, TAR, Xinjiang). For the moment, partners would be ICIMOD for the overall organization, Green Camel Bell NGO for Gansu Province, and Plateau Perspectives NGO for Qinghai province.
  5. KYRGYZSTAN: Organization of a national-level workshop for yak herders. Co-organized by YURTA, Mountain Societies Reserach Institute (UCA) and Mountain Partnership (Kyrgyzstan).
- **Note that only in the cases** of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan, the Community Dialogues would be formally implemented as Workshops.

## JUSTIFICATION: Why a WYHA?

"... *We invite States to strengthen cooperative action with effective involvement and sharing of experience of all relevant stakeholders, by strengthening existing arrangements, agreements and centres of excellence for sustainable mountain development, as well as exploring new arrangements and agreements, as appropriate*" ("The Future We Want", Río+20, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, UNCSD 2012).

"...**yaks play an important role in the domestic economies and substantiate any attempt to create sustainability in the animal husbandry sector.** Livestock-keeping has always been a risky undertaking in high mountain regions. The safety factor is served best in the animal herds when enduring yaks utilise marginal pasture in remote locations" (H. Kreutzmann, 1996).

"...yak are increasingly coming under pressure with closed borders and restrictions on grazing and movement. Furthermore, **yak herders are facing immense livelihood challenges**, not least due to climate change, and the younger generation is unwilling to continue with traditional yak herding, which poses a severe threat to this traditional occupation" (ICIMOD, 2016).

## COMMUNITY DIALOGUES IN HIGH ASIA (WYHA) PHASE 2: SCHEME

<b>COUNTRIES</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>PERIODIZATION duration</b>	<b>PARTNERS</b>	<b>Approx. BUDGET</b>
<u>AFGHANISTAN</u> Priority Action	Community Dialogue in Wakhan	Between April-May 2018 20 days	AKDN Ministry of Agriculture Afghanistan	4,000 \$
<u>PAKISTAN</u> Priority Action	Community Dialogue in Gilgit-Baltistan	Between Marh-May 2018 15 days	ICIMOD AKDN	2,500 \$
<u>BHUTAN</u> Priority Action	Institutional Dialogue to explore ways of including Bhutan in the WYHA scheme.	Between February-April 2018 10-15 days	Royal Government of Bhutan	3,500 \$
CHINA Complementary action	Institutional and Community Dialogues in Gansu, Sichuan, Qinghai, TAR, Xinjiang	Between May-July 2018	ICIMOD Chinese Government Green Camel Bell, Plateau Perspectives NGOs	10,000 \$
KYRGYZSTAN Complementary action	National-level workshop	Between February-March 2018	MSRI, Mountain Partnership, UCA	4,000 \$
<b>TOTAL Priority Actions</b>				<b>10,000 \$</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>24,000 \$</b>

## ABOUT THE PROJECT DESIGNER AND IMPLEMENTER

- YURTA Association is a specialized organization based in Spain but actively working in the High Asia region since its foundation. YURTA Association has received previous funding to carry out projects in China (2011), from WISP/IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), and the High Asia region (2016-2017), from FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations).

YURTA Association is a member of WAMIP (World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples), PKH (Pastoralism Knowledge Hub, FAO), and IUAES (International Union of Anthropological Sciences), and has worked and work in partnership with the following organizations and institutions:

Indigenous Partnership (India), National Research Centre on Yak (NRCY, India), Dungkharpa Welfare Association (India), ICIMOD (International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development), Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), Mongolian Pastoralists Alliance (MoPA), ACTED, GIZ, Helvetas, Women Alliance of Ladakh (WAL), Tibetan Women Association (TWA), South Asia Pastoralists Alliance (SAPA), University of Central Asia (UCA), Plateau Perspectives (China), Green Camel Bell (China), MACU (Mongolia), HIMALI Project (Ministry of Livestock Development, Nepal), Dairy Development Corporation (DDC, Nepal), Animal Husbandry Department and Veterinary Services (Ladakh).

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