

Inclusion of Mountain Women in the 70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

On March 10, 2026, myself and other members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF) at Utah Valley University, participated in a parallel event as part of the 70th annual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70). This event was intended to request the CSW70 include “justice awareness of Mountain Women through Student-Engaged Learning (SEL)” in its final document. The UIMF presented statements about local and international issues facing women in mountain regions, based on the community outreach opportunities, collaborative classroom assignments, research on mountain states worldwide, and policy forward analysis found through our participation in the SEL.



Matthew Erickson speaks about sustainable-development policy implementation in mountain regions and its effects on women at a CSW70 parallel event hosted by the UIMF.

My statement was centered on the implementation of effective sustainable development policy, using research on the Wasatch Front and Nepal. Throughout my research I found that when environmental management policy is ineffective, often women in mountain regions face

disproportionate costs. Proper evaluation of the proposed goals of policy, consideration of alternative policy strategies, and re-examination of efficacy is vital to addressing the issue of sustainable development in mountain regions. Environmental policy has widespread effects; the common-pool nature of the environment means that policy changes in the environmental sector lead to influence on economic and social policies as well. This interconnected system means that improving our sustainable development policy in mountain regions will allow for better outcomes for the women both economically and socially.

The opportunities provided by the SEL model allowed UIMF members to participate in community service, collaborate with traditional and non-traditional students, and analyze the effects of sustainable development policy at a local and international scale. This model of education was useful for me as I found the multi-lateral approach allowed for more connection to the material. Learning from community members, other students, professors, and the CSW70 event allowed me to develop a myriad of different skills related to sustainable development policy analysis.

Other statements at the UIMF's CSW70 event focused on the many other issues facing mountain women. The statement by Sophie Jackson explored how migration away from mountain regions and into urban areas can lead to increased negative outcomes for women. Roland Kabongo shared his insights on the mountain regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo through the lens of education and participation of mountain women in sustainable development policy.

Matthew Erickson, Utah Valley University Student