

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Hydrogeology Specialist (HI-CAS)

Project: Integrated Climate Adaptation Solution for the Hindu Kush Himalaya Region (HI-CAS)

Strategic Group: Resilient Economies and Landscapes

ToR

About ICIMOD

The Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region stretches 3,500km across Asia, spanning eight countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. Encompassing high-altitude mountain ranges, mid-hills, and plains, the zone is vital for the food, water, and energy security of up to two billion people and is a habitat for countless irreplaceable species. It is also acutely fragile – and frontline to the impacts of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), based in Kathmandu, Nepal, is an international organisation established in 1983, that is working to make this critical region greener, more inclusive and climate resilient. For more information, read our [Strategy 2030](#) and explore our [website](#).

Background

The Hydrogeology Specialist is being hired under the Integrated Climate Adaptation Solutions for the Hindu Kush Himalaya Region (HI-CAS) project at ICIMOD, funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) – Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD). The project aims to improve climate-resilient, nature-positive livelihoods while strengthening the leadership and agency of rural women and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal.

The project will be implemented through the adoption of GESI responsive and locally tailored climate adaptation solutions—grounded in feminist and human rights-based methodologies—that place the rights, agency, and leadership of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) at the centre. These evidence-informed Integrated Adaptation Solution Packages (IASPs) will combine springshed management, renewable energy technologies for power irrigation systems, and agrobiodiversity practices. They will be complemented by capacity building and knowledge sharing to drive institutional policy and action and to attract sustainable investments in climate action and development, particularly in the water, energy, and agrobiodiversity sectors, with a strong focus on women's and IPLCs' leadership.

The HI-CAS project will be implemented in two upazilas (sub-districts) in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh—Bandarban and Khagrachari districts; two gewogs (blocks) in Bhutan—Paro and Punakha; and two municipalities in Nepal—

Roshi and Dhankuta. Over its four-year duration, the project aims to benefit approximately 40,000 IPLCs and other vulnerable groups by reducing their exposure and sensitivity to climate change impacts while fostering ecosystem health and climate mitigation outcomes.

Position overview

The Hydrogeology Specialist will be responsible for supporting the delivery of results in line with the commitments ICIMOD has made in the HI-CAS Project Performance Measurement Framework, that is nested within our [Strategy 2030: Moving Mountains](#) and our [Medium-Term Action Plan V \(2023–2026\): Embracing Change and Accelerating Impact](#) related Results Framework 2023-26 and **GESI policy 2024**.

The Hydrogeology Specialist will play a critical role in advancing HI_CAS project's springshed management component. The position will provide scientific and technical expertise in hydrogeology to guide the planning, implementation, and monitoring of springshed management. Key responsibilities include hydrogeological assessments, characterising recharge areas, developing science-based protocols for spring recharge and protection, and monitoring groundwater-surface interactions. By strengthening the evidence base and ensuring technically sound designs, the Specialist will directly contribute to sustaining springs flows and building climate resilience of target communities.

Responsibilities

The Hydrogeology Specialist will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Thought leadership for advancing hydrogeology based springshed management

- Contribute actively to achieving HI-CAS project and ICIMOD's spring intervention outcomes and deliverables by providing hydrogeology expertise, fostering collaboration with partners, and expanding the knowledge base on groundwater and springs.
- Lead the process to develop strategies to create a supportive evidence-based pilot, policy and capacity development environment for piloting GESI responsive springshed management in the HI-CAs Project sites.

- Support the development of funding proposals, by leveraging hydrogeology-based field data and success cases to inform new project ideas and mobilise resources.

2. Implementation of hydrogeology informed springshed management

- Lead the springshed management component of the HI-CAS project as a key team member to co-develop and implement hydrogeology-based springshed management plans, including monitoring and evaluation frameworks, in the HI-CAS project sites in collaboration with multidisciplinary teams and country partners.
- Lead the design of inclusive science-based hydrogeological protocols (including citizen science), implementation methodologies, and detailed work and budget plans for the HI-CAS springshed management component, ensuring integration of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) principles.
- Lead the planning and conduct hydrogeological fieldwork with partners in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal; train and supervise field teams; and ensure quality assurance and proper management of hydro-meteorological and spring discharge data.
- Oversee and support the development of technical reports, documentation, and hydrogeological analyses with partners, and contribute to the development and piloting of decision-support tools and models to inform policy and practice.

3. Stakeholder Engagement and Capacity Building in springshed hydrogeology

- Lead the identification, mapping and engagement of diverse stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, NGOs, IPLCs, and academia) for piloting springshed interventions in the HI-CAS project sites.
- Support the development of Terms of Reference (ToRs) for implementing partners and technical consultants.
- Support in the assessment of partners' capacity needs and contribute to the design and delivery of tailored training modules, workshops, and capacity-building activities to strengthen their roles in springshed management, particularly hydrogeology.

4. Reporting and Knowledge Products

- Contribute to the development of knowledge products, including peer-reviewed journal articles, technical blogs, and other knowledge products on hydrogeology and springshed management, in collaboration with HI-CAS partners and the ICIMOD team.

- Provide timely and evidence-based technical inputs for project progress updates and donor reporting, drawing on hydrogeological assessments, field-data, and partner updates.
- Prepare training reports, manuals, and other technical documentation with input from resource persons and project teams to strengthen capacities on hydrogeology based springshed management.
- Ensure all research and documentation adhere to ethical standards, institutional policies, and quality guidelines.
- Support the writing of papers, blogs, field notes, and protocols to showcase HI-CAS interventions and outcomes, with a focus on hydrogeological analysis, and springshed management.
- Contribute to communication and outreach activities to promote evidence-based storytelling from the field.

5. Professional Representation

- Represent ICIMOD and the HI-CAS project at regional and international platforms, technical forums, and multi-stakeholder events relevant to hydrogeology, springshed management and climate adaptation.
- Actively engage with regional hydrogeology and climate adaptation networks to amplify project learnings and forge strategic collaborations.

Person Specification/Competencies

The position requires proven expertise in hydrogeology and groundwater management, with a focus on developing and applying methodologies for hydrogeological mapping to identify spring recharge zones. Experience in designing and implementing spring rejuvenation interventions and in monitoring their effectiveness, is essential. The role also involves supporting policy and decision-making processes to scale up springshed management approaches.

Candidates should have strong technical knowledge in climate adaptation and experience in implementing integrated solutions—particularly in the areas of springshed management, renewable energy systems, and agrobiodiversity-based practices.

The role requires the ability to co-develop knowledge products in collaboration with communities, government agencies, and other stakeholders, and to

strategically communicate project findings at local, national, regional, and global levels. Experience with cross-sectoral approaches and stakeholder engagement is key. A demonstrated ability to mainstream gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) throughout project design, implementation, and monitoring is essential.

ESSENTIAL

- Master's degree in natural sciences, hydrology, hydrogeology, watershed management, water resource management, or a relevant subject.
- At least 7 years of relevant work experience, of which at least 5 years should be in the field of springshed or watershed management, and/or relevant fields.
- Excellent technical skills, gained by development, and/or water resource management programmes.
- Excellent interpersonal and people management skills with experience working in multicultural environments and across different partners in different countries.
- Proven communication and outreach skills, including public speaking, presentation, and writing skills in English.
- Experience in the integration of gender equity and social inclusion into programming, applying inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary approaches.
- Demonstrated strong analytical capabilities, complemented by excellent communication and written skills in English.

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- Practical experience in hydrogeology-based springshed management concepts, methodologies and approaches.
- Experience in springshed management from policy and practice perspectives.
- A good understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the HKH and other mountainous regions.
- Experience in the integration of gender equity and social inclusion into programming, applying inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary approaches.

Reporting and supervising

The Hydrogeology Specialist will report to the Senior Project Coordinator for deliverables related to the project and overall management of the component. The Senior Intervention Manager – Springs in Action Area - Landscapes will be the co-supervisor, especially for the technical aspects of the project. The position also

involves collaboration with Action Area – Economies, other Strategic Groups, leads of cross-cutting areas (GESI, Climate Change and biodiversity) and central units of ICIMOD to ensure smooth project implementation and effective internal and external communication.

Location

You will be working in a cross-cultural, impact-oriented environment at ICIMOD's head office in Kathmandu, Nepal. Frequent travel in the HI-CAS project sites and mountainous regions of the HKH region will be required. Kathmandu is a lively and exciting place to live. People are friendly, living costs are comparatively inexpensive, food is delicious (with a range of local and international cuisines), and there are good local and international schools and a low crime rate. Nepal offers amazing trekking trails, white water rafting, and safaris, combined with a rich culture and charming yet lively nightlife.

Duration

Two-year fixed-term project contract with a probation period of six months.

Remuneration

This is an international position at ICIMOD. The starting annual gross salary for this position is **USD 34062**. Gross salary comprises basic salary, provident fund, family/post adjustment allowance, and child/dependency allowances. Salaries and benefits at ICIMOD are competitive compared with other international organisations. We offer a comprehensive benefits package which includes insurances (medical, life and accidental), children's education grant for a maximum of 2 children below 18 years of age, severance pay, paid leave (30 holidays and 10 public holidays per year) and a day care facility.

For expatriates, there is a tax exemption in Nepal; they are responsible for their home country's tax payments. Expatriate staff are entitled to housing allowance, annual home leave ticket, shipment of personal effects, and an installation and repatriation allowance.

ICIMOD's core values

Our core values are integrity, neutrality, relevance, inclusiveness, openness, and ambition. These values are an expression of our culture and are central to the guiding beliefs and principles of our work and behaviour. Our core values will lie at the heart of ICIMOD operations and delivery. They will underpin everything we

do and frame how we work with our partners. They reflect our founding intentions and the balances we seek to hold, while equipping ourselves for the future.

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and safeguarding

ICIMOD's human resource selection process is based on the qualifications and competence of the applicants. As an employer, ICIMOD is committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion and offers equal opportunities to applicants from all backgrounds and walks of life, including but not limited to gender, age, national origin, religion, race, caste, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or social status. ICIMOD strongly encourages applications from all eligible applicants, especially women, from all parts of the HKH region.

ICIMOD is dedicated to establishing and upholding a safe and nurturing work environment where all its employees can participate fully and meaningfully without fear of violence, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Any type of abuse or harassment, including sexual misconduct [including child abuse], by our staff, representatives, or stakeholders is not condoned or tolerated.

Method of application

Applicants are requested to apply online before **12 October 2025** (11:59 PM Nepal Standard Time) through [ICIMOD Vacancy Application Portal](#).

Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.