



ICIMOD

TERMS OF REFERENCE / JOB DESCRIPTION

Deputy Director General

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 vulnerable 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 knowledge organisation focused on the HKH region, working since 1983 to deliver greener, more inclusive, and climate-resilient development. Our work is guided by our [Strategy 2030](#), [Medium-Term Action Plan V \(2023–2026\)](#) and the associated Results Framework, and our various [policies](#). Learn more on our [website](#).

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Deputy Director General (DDG) is a member of ICIMOD's Directorate and a senior management role supporting ICIMOD to deliver sustained results and measurable impact across the Hindu Kush Himalayas, in line with the vision and mission of Strategy 2030: Moving Mountains. Reporting to the Director General (DG) and working closely with the Director of Administration, Finance, and Operations (DAFO) and Senior Management Committee (SMC), the DDG is accountable for performance, quality, and delivery across ICIMOD's climate and environment-related research-for-development portfolio, including practical solutions for green, resilient and inclusive mountain development.

The role supports Board-level governance and assurance processes; collaborates with the DG and SMC on strategic change priorities to strengthen institutional effectiveness and future fitness; and supports the DG to ensure coherence across institution-wide planning and monitoring, partnerships and regional cooperation, business development and resource mobilisation, and communications and knowledge uptake. As a visible representative of ICIMOD, the DDG engages in high-level national, regional, and global forums, navigates geopolitical complexity with sound judgment, and provides interim leadership in the Director General's absence.





RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Deputy Director General are set out below under six objectives, each supported by practical expectations for delivery.

OBJECTIVE 1

Portfolio performance and impact: Ensure coherent, high-quality, and impactful delivery of ICIMOD’s research-for-development portfolio, translating knowledge into measurable policy influence and outcomes for climate resilience, biodiversity, environmental sustainability and inclusive mountain development.

What this means in practice:

- Provide oversight and guidance to ICIMOD’s three Strategic Groups - *Climate and Environment Risks, Resilient Economies and Landscapes*, and *Regional Action and Global Advocacy* and their respective portfolios, ensuring delivery against agreed results, budgets, and milestones, with timely course-correction where performance or spending is off-track, and supported by proportionate and practical portfolio planning, budgeting, and reporting processes.
- Strengthen portfolio prioritisation, quality assurance, and problem-solving by supporting and constructively challenging Strategic Group Heads and teams on strategic choices, delivery risks, and quality.
- Ensure the portfolio remains responsive to ICIMOD’s Regional Member Countries (RMCs) needs and emerging regional and global challenges, informed by strategic foresight and periodic portfolio review.
- Enable strong collaboration and integration across the Strategic Groups, ensuring systematic attention to cross-cutting priorities –particularly Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI), climate, and biodiversity – through adoption of effective design, delivery, monitoring, and learning approaches.
- Ensure gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), including youth, are embedded as an integral dimension of portfolio quality and impact, with clear expectations, practical guidance, and accountability for implementation across Strategic Groups and partners.



OBJECTIVE 2

Governance, assurance, and stewardship: Provide robust assurance on portfolio performance, risk, GESI and safeguarding, and resource allocation to support sound decision-making, accountability, and effective governance.

What this means in practice

- Through the DG, provide strategic analysis and assurance inputs to the Board of Governors, the Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) of the Board, and ICIMOD Support Group (ISG, ICIMOD donors) processes, including high-quality papers, reports, and presentations that enable timely decisions and oversight.
- Support Board meetings and interactions through timely planning and coordination, including agenda inputs, decision-ready documentation, and follow-up on agreed actions.
- Ensure annual planning, budgeting, and progress reporting are aligned with Board and ISG needs, providing clear, decision-ready information to support oversight, accountability, and timely governance decisions.
- Ensure clear visibility of key risks, delivery issues, and performance trends, and drive timely corrective action and escalation as needed.
- Strengthen management discipline across the portfolio, ensuring compliance, transparency, and responsible stewardship of resources.
- Ensure close coordination with the Director of Administration, Finance, and Operations (DAFO) and their teams, and sit as observer to the Finance Committee of the Board, enabling sound financial and operational tracking, compliance, and effective risk management.

OBJECTIVE 3

Strategic change management: Strengthen effectiveness and future fitness by improving portfolio delivery capability, results quality, outcomes and impact, management practices, and continuous learning in line with Strategy 2030.

What this means in practice

- Support the DG in the periodic review of Strategy 2030: Moving Mountains and four-year planning cycles [Medium-Term Action Plan (MTAP)], ensuring alignment between ICIMOD's strategic ambitions, the four-year plans, and annual work programmes.
- Drive implementation of priority change commitments set out in Strategy 2030 and the centre's MTAP cycles, ensuring change translates into improved delivery of outcomes and impact.
- Identify and advance strategic opportunities arising from change (e.g. partnerships, innovation and digital enablement, AI, delivery models, capabilities, and efficiencies) that enhance ICIMOD's relevance, comparative advantage, and performance.
- Promote innovation in delivery modalities, approaches, and practices, enabling responsible experimentation, learning, and scaling of effective solutions.
- Embed adaptive management to ensure continuous learning, timely adjustment, and improvement based on evidence from implementation, reviews, and evaluation.
- Work closely with SMC and the Human Resources & Organisational Development (HROD) Unit to strengthen the organisational culture, management systems, leadership practice, and organisational capabilities that underpin effective delivery.
- Engage with the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) to ensure that learning from independent evaluations informs portfolio and project design, and timely portfolio adjustments.

OBJECTIVE 4

Systems for results, influence, partnerships, and resource mobilisation: Help ensure effective systems, standards and oversight for results management, partnerships, communications and knowledge uptake, and resource mobilisation and business development.

What this means in practice

- Engage at senior level, as needed, with priority partners, donors and prospective funders, to position ICIMOD's comparative advantage and investment propositions to generate new and diversified funding and strategic growth.
- Support the development of effective resource mobilisation and business development strategies and approaches for ICIMOD, including, where relevant, in support of RMC priorities and financing opportunities.
- Help strengthen governance and decision-making for business development, including pipeline prioritisation and bid/no-bid decisions, with a focus on opportunities with strong strategic fit, value-for-money, and manageable risk.
- Ensure institution-wide approaches that enable the translation of ICIMOD's results, evidence, and learning into coherent narratives, communications priorities, and knowledge uptake pathways that strengthen credibility, influence, and use of evidence.
- Ensure partnership strategies and engagement approaches are strategically aligned with RMC needs and priorities, quality-assured, and designed to support results, regional cooperation, and long-term collaboration.
- Strengthen institutional systems for engagement with RMCs and priority international partners, ensuring consistency, quality, and follow-through.
- Support and collaborate with the DG and SMC for the implementation and periodic updating of ICIMOD's business development and resource mobilisation strategy, ensuring priorities, targets, and accountabilities are aligned with institutional objectives.



OBJECTIVE 5

Senior leadership of people and delivery capacity: Provide senior leadership and oversight of ICIMOD's technical staff and managers through Strategic Group Heads, strengthening leadership practice, management capacity, and accountability for performance and results.

What this means in practice

- Provide leadership, direction, and constructive challenge to Strategic Group Heads and teams, ensuring clarity of priorities, strong leadership and management practice, and accountability for delivery, performance, and use of resources.
- Strengthen management capacity across the portfolio by setting expectations for leadership quality, decision-making, prioritisation, and problem-solving, and by supporting continuous improvement in management practice.
- Ensure consistent performance management and leadership standards across the DDG's line management chain, in line with ICIMOD policies, to support effective delivery and staff development.
- Foster a collaborative, inclusive, and high-performance organisational culture that supports innovation, accountability, cross-functional cooperation, and staff wellbeing.

OBJECTIVE 6

Representation, diplomacy, and institutional leadership: Represent ICIMOD in high-level national, regional and global forums, advancing regional approaches and reinforcing ICIMOD's role as a trusted regional knowledge and policy partner.

What this means in practice

- Represent ICIMOD in priority national, regional, and global forums and engagements, positioning ICIMOD's evidence and strategic priorities to strengthen influence, profile, partnerships, and uptake of evidence.
- Engage strategically in regional and global policy processes to ensure ICIMOD's expertise informs decision-making, and the HKH agenda is reflected in relevant agendas and outcomes.
- Navigate geopolitical complexity with sound judgement, protecting institutional trust and relationships while enabling cooperation and impact across RMCs and partners.
- As assigned by the DG, act as interim DG during their absence, ensuring continuity of leadership and timely decision-making.



PERSON SPECIFICATION/ COMPETENCIES

A. Education: An advanced university degree (minimum master's; PhD highly preferred) in environmental sciences, climate change, natural resource management, development studies, public policy, environmental economics, international development, or another field relevant to ICIMOD's mandate.

B. Executive leadership and people management:

- A minimum of 15 years of progressively responsible professional experience, including at least 10 years in senior leadership or executive management roles, within international, regional, or complex multi-stakeholder organisations.
- Strong leadership and people management experience, including oversight of senior managers and multidisciplinary teams, and the ability to build a high-performance, inclusive, and ethical organisational culture.

- Demonstrated commitment to inclusive leadership, gender equality and social inclusion, ethical conduct, and strengthening the organisation's strategic positioning, partnerships and funding base.

C. Strategy, governance, and Board engagement

- Demonstrated experience in shaping institutional strategy and translating long-term vision into coherent operational and portfolio priorities.
- Proven ability to work effectively with governing bodies, including Board of Governors-level engagement, and with senior management committees and diverse institutional stakeholders.
- Strong understanding of governance, compliance, financial and risk management, and accountability in an international or intergovernmental setting, including the ability to support robust decision-making and institutional assurance.



D. Portfolio leadership, quality, and impact

- Extensive experience leading large, complex, multi-country and/or multi-thematic programmes, including research-for-development, policy-oriented, or knowledge portfolios related to climate, biodiversity, the environment, and sustainable development.
- Proven track record of ensuring scientific quality, innovation, and relevance, and of translating evidence into policy influence and development impact related to climate, biodiversity, the environment, and sustainable development.
- Strong understanding of finance and budget management, human resources management, and other administrative processes.
- Strong expertise in results-based management, monitoring, evaluation and learning, and adaptive management frameworks, including within knowledge-based organisations.

E. Partnerships, regional cooperation, and diplomacy

- Demonstrated ability to establish and sustain high-level partnerships with governments, regional bodies, non-state actors, and academic organisations.
- Proven ability to operate effectively in geopolitically complex environments, exercising sound judgement,

diplomacy, and political acuity while safeguarding institutional credibility and relationships.

- Familiarity with the HKH region and its environmental, socio-economic, and geopolitical dynamics, and substantial experience working in, or on issues relevant to, developing country or regional contexts.

F. Business development and resource mobilisation (BDRM)

- Extensive experience in strategic resource mobilisation, donor engagement, and fundraising for large-scale programmes or portfolios.
- Ability to align resource mobilisation and funding strategies with institutional priorities, impact objectives, and long-term financial sustainability.

G. Communication, representation, and advocacy

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English.
- Understanding of communications and engagement approaches in the development sector.
- Proven experience representing an organisation in high-level regional and international forums and policy processes, including the ability to communicate complex evidence with credibility and influence.

REPORTING AND SUPERVISING

The Deputy Director General reports to the Director General and provides oversight of the heads of the three Strategic Groups (SG1: Climate and Environment Risks; SG2: Resilient Economies and Landscapes; and SG3: Regional Action and Global Advocacy) and their teams, as well as the Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Lead. The DDG will also work closely with key central units, including the Central Communications Unit and Strategic Results, Partnerships, and Business Development. The role works in close collaboration with the Director for Administration, Finance, and Operations, as well as all SMC members.

LOCATION

You will be working in a cross-cultural, impact-oriented environment at ICIMOD's head office in Kathmandu, Nepal. Frequent travel in the HKH region and internationally 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 a charming yet lively nightlife.

DURATION

Initially, four years, with a six-month probation period. There is a possibility of an extension of up to an additional four years, subject to performance, the requirements of the position, and funding availability.

REMUNERATION

This is an international position at ICIMOD with a competitive and attractive salary and benefits package, which includes a basic salary, provident fund, family/post adjustment allowance, child/dependency allowances, insurances (medical, life and accidental), children's education grant for a maximum of two (2) children below 18 years of age, severance pay, paid leave (30 holidays and 10 public holidays per year) and a child daycare facility.

The DDG is also entitled to a dedicated vehicle with driver support.

Expatriate (non-Nepali national) staff are entitled to housing allowance, annual home leave ticket, shipment of personal effects, and a relocation and repatriation allowance.

For expatriates, there is a tax exemption in Nepal; they are responsible for paying their home country's taxes.





ICIMOD'S CORE VALUES

Our core values are integrity, neutrality, relevance, inclusiveness, openness, and ambition. These values express 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 applicants' qualifications and competence. 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, across the HKH region.

ICIMOD is dedicated to establishing and upholding a safe and nurturing work environment in which all its employees can participate fully and meaningfully, free from 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

Interested and eligible applicants must apply online by 5 July 2026 (11:59 PM Nepal Standard Time) through <https://apply.workable.com/icimod/>

Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.

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