

THE AUTHOR

Urs Schaffner is a civil engineer currently working as a consultant on road construction and maintenance in Third World countries. He obtained his Master's Degree in Civil Engineering from the Federal Institute of Technology at Zurich, Switzerland. He has recently completed a 5 year assignment as Project Co-Manager of the Lamosangu-Jiri Road Project in Nepal and prior to that a 3 1/2 year assignment as Survey/Design Engineer of the same project. He is particularly interested in rural road survey, design, construction, and maintenance in technically difficult terrain.

ICIMOD is the first International Centre in the field of mountain area development. It was founded out of widespread recognition of the alarming environmental degradation of mountain habitats, and consequent increasing impoverishment of mountain communities. A coordinated and systematic effort on an international scale was deemed essential to design and implement more effective development responses in each of the countries concerned.

The establishment of the Centre is based upon an agreement between His Majesty's Government of Nepal and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) signed in 1981. The Centre was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Nepal in December 1983, and began its professional activities in September 1984.

The Centre, located in Kathmandu, the capital of the Kingdom of Nepal, carries the status of an autonomous international organisation.

